

CAMEOS

AND OTHER POEMS.



FLORENCE G. ATTENBOROUGH.



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“Cameos,”
AND OTHER POEMS.

A Volume of Verse

BY
FLORENCE G. ATTENBOROUGH,
(“CHRYSTABEL.”)



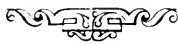
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WITH
EVERY EXPRESSION OF THANKS
FOR THEIR MOST GENEROUS SUPPORT,
THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS

Dedicated

TO THE
SUBSCRIBERS,
AS A TOKEN OF THE AUTHOR'S SINCERE
APPRECIATION OF THEIR HELP,
AND IN THE EARNEST HOPE
THAT THE FUTURE
MAY PROVE HER TO HAVE BEEN
WORTHY OF THEIR ENCOURAGEMENT.

*Marlborough Road,
Ealing,
February, 1898.*



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PRELUDE.

A LITTLE bird upon the wing ;
 Will any pause to hear it sing,
 Or is its flight too close to Earth,
 To make its chant of any worth ?

A tiny bud that seeks to bloom ;
 Will glorious flowers give it room,
 Or is its fragile growth too small,
 To claim a garden space at all ?

What would I, little bird of mine ?
 Thou can'st but try that wing of thine ;
 Thou can'st but swell thy trustful throat,
 And leave to Bards to judge the note.

And what, oh tiny bud ? Be thou
 A sprig upon a briar bough ;
 So should there come a storm of rain,
 Thou'lt give but sweetness back again !



A JUBILEE ODE
TO
Victoria—Queen and Empress.

1837—1897.

*(A copy of the following Poem has been graciously accepted
by Her Majesty.)*

QUEEN of the Isles, and Empress of the Land
Where sacred Ganges lips the golden sand :
Mother of Princes, Rarest of the Race
Which proudly points the nations to Thy place,—
Wilt Thou bend low to hear a minstrel sing
A tale of Clio for an offering ?

On that June morning when the flush'd light fell
O'er gorgeous scenes which Thou rememb'rest well,
On ermin'd purple, and on flashing spears
Marking the advent of Thy ruling years :
What wond'ring millions turn'd to view the Throne,
And pray that God would guide Thee as His own !

At first, behold, a mist loom'd on Thy way,
It was the prelude to a Summer's day :
Hyperion smiled : the breaking clouds dipp'd West
When striving peoples laid their swords to rest,
And o'er the miles where struggle had been strong,
Eunomia yielded unto dulcet song.

The patriot look'd with hope-enkindled eye,
Whilst Progress held her silver'd sceptre high :
The breath of change, like sunshine after rain,
Caressed the hills, and recompensed the plain.
And those who wondered what Thy rule should be,
Lost in allegiance doubly bent the knee.

Meridian dawned : we saw Thee as a Bride,
ALBERT THE GOOD stood stalwart at Thy side :
With fearless grace, and by a prudent part,
He won affection in the nation's heart,
Till benedictions, like a sweet refrain,
Proclaimed the blessing of a duple reign.

Diverse the years were, as all years must be
That bear Time's crowding ripples to the sea :
Glory and gloaming : praise, and pause, and knell
Bewitched our shores in greeting or farewell,
But all around Love twined a golden frame,
And carved in sunlight his celestial name.

Fair Mother Thou, and Wife, as well as Queen,
The star of Goodness mark'd a brow serene :
The home was Thy dear temple where the light
Dwelt on the altar all the day and night,
And baby worshippers with happy voice,
Embraced Thy hands, and taught Thee to rejoice.

When came the din of Battle in the East,
When war was rife, and danger was increased,
Straight from Thy throne a beacon flame shone out
Where Hope refused to take the kiss of Doubt ;
So men grew strong and valiant in the fight,
Till all the alien throngs were put to flight.

Then gentle Peace, the mistress of the Nine,
Loitered between the wheatfield and the vine ;
The sons of Ceres saw her standing still
In luscious lowlands, sheltered by a hill,
And throstles, poised above the orchard trees,
Bequeathed a God-taught anthem to the breeze.

Pomona laughed in apple-scented ways,
Where rosy circles cluster'd in her praise ;
The rivers running like Castalian springs,
Sped to the unstirr'd sea on crystal wings,
And English mothers led their children o'er
The sylvan stretches of a flow'ry floor.

Oh that such dusk must be ! There came the day
When Death the seeker tiptoed on his way :
ALBERT THE GOOD looked out upon the world
Where, at December's touch, the brown leaves curled,
And thoughts were his : '*Sweet thoughts*' that had no tongue,
That could alone by seraph's voice be sung.

He dreamed and slept. A million tears were shed
Because the cypress wreathed His fallen head :
And still, through all the mystic arch of time,
The bells of mem'ry toll a tender chime
For that great Prince, whose record will abide,
Till Grief and Darkness shall be satisfied.

In such dread storm when Heaven's very breath
Seem'd weighted by the eloquence of Death ;
When high-born orphans clasp'd Thee by the hand,
And knowing only, could not understand :
Then, for Thy country's sake, 'twas Thine to face
The awful grandeur of a lonely place.

The world looked on ; it marvelled at Thy power ;
It saw Thee brave in that Plutonian hour,
And casting off the garment of despair,
Transfigured Faith held converse with Thee there ;
Until with those '*sweet thoughts*' that *He* had had
Thine heart arose to make the Empire glad.

Now, in the bracelet diamonded by years,
The rarest stone in Clio's hoard appears :
Its solemn splendour, bright'ning as it glows,
Reflects the beauty of the rip'ning Rose,
And distant peoples sing across the foam,
And envy those who chant its praise at Home.

For sixty years Thy fame has arch'd the seas
With greater glory than belong to these ;
And gentle graces, centred in Thy soul,
Have reined the nations by their warm control,
Whilst Thou hast clasped starred Astrea to Thy breast,
And won Thy Queenhood by Thy constant *Best*.

Hadst Thou been ruler in the ancient age,
When Attic fires illumed th' historic page,
Ionian temples would have held Thy name,
Whilst watching vestals kept the sacred flame ;
And Delphic oracles, in nobler verse,
Had tempted white-robed Pythia to rehearse !

But, if such rites belonged to pagan days,
Tis ours to offer a sincerer praise,
And in the gentle guise which Eros wears,
Mem'ry a hope, and Hope a mem'ry bears,
The eyes of nations sparkle at Thy sway,
And see the sunlight of Thy Rule to-day.

For Freedom's trophies, turreted with gold,
Rise o'er the shameful destinies of old :
No trailing chains restrain the stirring wing,
Yea ! Thou hast taught the Orient to sing,
And rival races trample in the dust
The weapons blunted by untended rust.

In stately halls Apollo leads his choir,
Æolus hears the music of the lyre.
Art has its fame, and Worship its repose.
In holy aisles the windowed glory glows,
Whilst Sabbath bells chime sweetly o'er the miles,
Where, for his day of rest, the peasant smiles.

And now, behold, the tramp of eager feet
Proclaims the sceptre of Thy flag complete :
From yonder South, and from the sturdy North
At Thy behest, the warriors come forth ;
Splendid in peace they march in rare array,
And know no distance on so fair a way !

Welcome we give them,—Brothers of the free,
Wedded with us in loyalty to Thee !
The tide-borne hosts, the sons of British sires,
The dusky dwellers under Afric's fires,
All shall rejoice, for all shall be as one,
In this proud year, whose pageant has begun.

Oh Thou Liege Lady looking to the West,
What glorious sunset crowns the mountain crest !
Hark ! where the farthest landscape meets the sea,
The Isles do homage, and the waves agree.
God make Thee glad, as He has made Thee true,
Until He give Fair Morrow for Thy due.

CAMEOS.

TO T. L. SOUTHGATE, ESQ.

*The following poem is inscribed as an expression of thanks
for the opportunity afforded to the Author of inspecting
his collection of notable Cameos, the suggestiveness of
which has inspired these lines.*



YE breathless oracles, thro' whom the Past,—
Attired in mystic robes which Time has cast
In folds around the ages,—yet is known ;
What proud remembrances are all your own !
What stirring records glorify your days,
And bid us add the clarion note of praise !

When, in the splendid Bygone, Art became
A steady glow beneath a smokeless flame :
When, as Religion she had gain'd control
O'er the outpourings of a nation's soul,
Then gem and jewel lifted from the mine
That granted fruit more precious than the vine,
Woody cunning hands to grave each burnish'd breast,
And yield obedience to innate behest,

A stroke became a poem, every line
 Was an oblation on a cherish'd shrine :
 The diamond-point bewitch'd the hearts of men,
 Till Thought, too proud to flutter from a pen,
 Carv'd out her form in beauty on a gem,
 And crowned herself, as with a diadem.

Devout in care, and fervent in his aim,
 The artist shaped, within a level frame
 His soul's conception of some darling theme,
 Caught from afar—or fashion'd from a dream :
 Thus he endowed the surface of a stone
 With inspiration, giving it his own.
 Kings became gods, and gods became as kings,
 The high partakers of terrestrial things :
 Love, War, and Wine burst panting on a scene
 That, but for Art, were solidly serene :
 The Poet's fancies re-incarnate came,
 They put the ministry of words to shame,
 Whilst wings, and flow'rs, and all the wealth of grace
 That poised, imagined, round the Templed place,
 Carved on a gem, made worshippers more strong
 To wreath a laurel, or declaim a song !

Homage, Revenge, the goblet, and the shield,
 In perfect image, stood again revealed ;
 Once more the Victor drove the chariot-wheels,
 Whilst proud patricians circled at his heels ;
 Once more the dancers entertained the feast,
 And plucked the tuneful cith'ra of the East.

The cultured pagans, and their mystic seers,
 Chisell'd on stones the legends of the years :
 The cameos glow'd, Aurora rode afar,
 And scatter'd dewdrops from her rosy car :

Young Bacchus, smiling, tempted Love to drink
 From the chaste chalice, foaming at the brink.
 Fair Aphrodite, nourished of the foam
 Sprung, with long pendent tresses, from her home,
 Whilst, with a massive beauty shared by none,
 The Apotheosis* of Augustus shone !

The vanish'd æons buried many a word
 That had been *sesame*, could we have heard :
 The thousand splendours of Immortal Greece,
 Since gallant Jason arm'd him for the Fleece ;
 Th' Imperial glories of uplifted Rome,
 Built stalwart on the hills, beneath the dome,
 That burn'd with stars ; the Dynasties that sway'd
 The throne of Egypt as a wind, and made
 E'en Attica their debtors,—all are set ;
 But Art makes deathless pictures of them yet !

Ye precious cameos, from ye we trace
 The thought and deeds of many a bygone race ;
 Ye speak to us where Knowledge, tempest tossed,
 Sudden grew blind, and own'd herself as lost,
 Where vain researches dwarfed the student's zeal,
 And Echo mocked his eloquent appeal.

Features and raiment reconciled with creed,
 Thro' ye administer to Clio's need :
 Turquoise, and ruby, emerald, and sard,
 Mirror for us the hero and the bard
 Whose classic faces, lifted on the stone,
 Look, o'er the dust of ages in our own.

* *Said to be the finest Cameo in the world.*

Imagination faints beneath the sense
Of homage to the Past, whose works immense
Are the foundations now, of mightier toil,
To which, perchance, they yet may be the foil :
Shame if one say—" Lost Art hath here a grave " !
What ? Has the lustre vanished from the wave,
Does Psyche dote on beauteous things no more,
Whilst yet all jewels sparkle on the shore ?

Art feeds on Art, though various the form,
Since she may be a harbinger of storm,
A mother of repose ; her ev'ry mood
Hath in itself the soul of something good,
And, phoenix-like, she evermore must spring
High, o'er the death flame, kindled by her wing.

So, from these chisell'd jewels may arise
Some newer knowledge that shall make men wise
In ways more cultured, and in Truth more sure ;
In zeal more fervent, and in Art more pure ;—
For all the Future groweth on the Past,
And ev'ry gift hath greater gifts at last.



SUMMER END.

WHAT are you dreaming of Summer ?
 Sleeping so still in the deep of the woods,
 Listless, and lone ;
 Where the chill wind of the grape-burden'd Autumn
 Sighs for the loss of the clear-throated song,
 Sweet and your own ;
 And forests make moan,
 In the starred shadow, from whence the lorn minstrel
 Of twilight has flown !

Corn-yellow and brown,
 The leaves hurry down
 To cover your feet once so royal with roses ;
 Bare are they now, and the landscape discloses
 Mist-haunted hollows, and lingering gleam,
 Falling uncertain on meadow and stream.

Will it be well,
 When lowlands shall swell
 Eastward and Westward with flood of the rains,
 Brimming the borders of harvested plains ?
 Will it be well when the pastures are white,
 Crystall'd and solemn by day, and by night,
 Priestly in vesture, yearning for speech,
 By the dumb stretches of grass-land and reach ?

Oh, there is Silence ; the swallows have fled,
 The last leaves are dying in clusters of red,
 Heaped o'er the levels, where rainbows of flow'rs
 Scented the spaces in sunnier hours

Cometh the girding of river and rill,
Sails will be absent, and wheels will be still,
What of the store in the barn : Is there wheat ?
Yea, and the task of the harvest was sweet :
Plenty leaped forth from the breast of the land,
Plenty leaped into the gathering hand.

Look to the North, and be stalwart for snow,
Over the borders the young wheat will grow
Ripe for our Brothers, but we, in our need,
Have the sweet knowledge of harvest indeed !

All then is well,
Leaf-fall, and silence, and slumber, and knell ;
After awhile
Summer, half-waking, will turn with a smile.
Then we shall say —
‘ Look ! In the morning the low light is gray,
There will be glory at noontide to-day ! ’



IN THE GARDEN.

(EASTER CAROL.)

To the Garden, very early,
 Weeping Mary went,
 With the incense of the spices
 Had the night been spent ;
 And she hied, ere dawn of day,
 To the Place where Jesus lay,—
 But the stone was rolled away,
 Hallelujah !

From the Sepulchre so empty,
 All on loss intent ;
 Unto John of Jesus' bosom,
 Weeping Mary went ;
 'They have ta'en the Lord away,
 It is lonely where He lay,'—
 But the stone was gone that Day,
 Hallelujah !

Raiment only in the hollow
 Of the rich man's tomb ;
 Homeward went the sad disciples,
 Thro' the silent gloom :
 Dawning unto Mary's sight,
 Lo ! The angels clothed in white,
 Mark'd the failing of the Night,
 Hallelujah !

In the Garden, yet so early,
Waited she in quest ;
Oh ! if only she could find Him,
Wonder were at rest :
' Mary !'—When that Voice was heard,
All creation's hosts were stirred,
There was Heaven in the word ;
Hallelujah !

Let us turn and see Him standing,
Happy Marys we ;
In 'Rabboni' there is knowledge,
And upris'n is He :
Resurrected worlds to-day
See the angels where He lay,
And the stone *is* rolled away,
Hallelujah !



DAY DECLINING.

THE West is storm'd by gorgeous colours, flung
 In splendid tumult o'er a closing page,
 Where Peace and Passion mightily engage,
 And Life articulates in ev'ry tongue :
 O'er yonder verge the early carols sung
 By downy minstrels on a dawn-lit stage,
 Prelude to us the hours of later age,
 Whereon the bracelet of the stars is hung.

Our world is bartering the day for sleep,
 She bargains for her dreams, and understands
 That for the opiate dusk on vale and steep,
 She lends her glory unto other lands :
 So o'er the dew-seal'd covenant she smiles,
 Whilst gloam and glamour wrap the restful miles.

MID-AUTUMN.

A FLAME of leaf runs smokeless on the walls,
 And tongues of crimson tangle all around ;
 Thro' ever thinning branches, gloaming falls
 On littered soil, and not a break of sound
 Touches the silence, misty and profound.

Beneath a paling patch of purple sky,
 The last red poppies tremble to behold
 The fruitless boughs, the roseless hedges nigh,
 The uplands mourning for the carried gold,
 The look of loss upon the furrowed mould.

Mosaic are the leaves ; they flush and burn,
 They mock the yellow of the stars, and then
 Grow warm with brown, as tho' 'twas theirs to earn
 The polished robe the chestnut weareth, when
 The sportsmen's guns wake thunders in the glen.

And tall—so tall against the growing dark,
 The knotted shafts of trees surmount the base
 Of roots entombed in moss : October's mark
 Is as an aureole round Nature's face,
 Where thick-rimm'd green to auburn hues give place.

So Autumn maketh regal with designs
 The floors of woods, the thresholds of the streams :
 In every sheltered corner there are shrines,
 Bequeathed by zephyrs troubled in their dreams,
 And stirring vaguely, unto minor themes.

Few wings are lifted : scarce is song, the hills
That edge the world stand high against the moon :
Her spear wounds all the dusk, tho' shadow chills
Our recollections of effulgent noon,
Whose gown has trailed across the seas so soon.

The nests hold sleep : the tinkle of a bell
From yonder fold sounds far,—far,—far away :
The foamless pools which shrink not yet, nor swell,
Bear on their hearts the silver and the gray,
Whilst Night speaks prayer upon the knees of Day.

VIGIL.

BELOVÉD, Belovéd,
The sheep are safe in the fold ;
We are the shepherds who watch the sheep,
The bells have chimed on the road to sleep,
And hush ! They dream of the tale we told—
Our little lambs in the cradle fold.

Belovéd, Belovéd,
The light is over the hill ;
Hark how the anthems from yonder Dome
Make warm the temples of God and Home :
On Earth be peace, and to men goodwill,
So we go on to Bethlehem still.

Belovéd, Belovéd,
The sheep are safe in the fold ;
Our Mass of Christus will be at dawn,
The Wise are waiting the break of morn,
Let Faith bring hither the myrrh and gold,
For in our East is the Star of Old !

GLAMOUR

A GOLDEN cobweb in the sun, —
It will be gone when day is done,
Ah !

If the gladsome hour of dreaming
Fades in waking pain,
And this symphony of seeming
Ends without refrain ;
Look me in my face, and sigh,
But you shall not say ' Good-bye.'

A golden cobweb in the sun, —
Why must it go when day is done?
Ah!

Summer song, and cluster'd clover,
Faith about my feet ;
Give to me the hour twice over,
Since the dream is sweet :
Then, if waking be to woe,
Take my head, and lay it low.

A silver thread upon a reel,
And all unwound when you shall kneel :
Ah !

If the vast mysterious glories
Of meridian noon,
Shall be changed to ended stories
'Neath a misty moon ;
Look in my dead face, and sigh,
But, you *shall* not say ' Good-bye, '

MY KINGDOM.

My kingdom ? 'Tis a chanted sphere,
 Where April loiters all the year ;—
 Where arching glories thro' the rain
 Fill dewy worlds with hope again.

A poet's realm is mine, and there
 Pomona's apples grow more fair ;
 Whilst gay Apollo leads his choir,
 And tunes again the dulcet lyre.

Oh looking East, or looking West,
 I worship dawn, or dream of rest.
 For Psyche, at the hidden shrine,
 Feeds Fancy's flame with truths divine.

Where sunlight floods Castalian springs,
 In cloistered vales, she kneels and sings ;—
 If clouds drop low, she leans afar,
 And smiles because she sees a star !

Oh take the lustre from the wave,
 Or shame the fount where lilies lave ;
 My kingdom yet shall be mine own,
 Whilst Astrea keeps her stainless throne !

FINALE.

THRO' thick'ning shadows, dimly dark and dumb,

Behold I come,

This once, perchance, dear stranger, for all time

To glean a shaft of light, to thaw the clime

Of rigid air about my frozen heart,

Ere in the shadow soon, we two must part :

And you will lay

With all your kingly strength and giant clay

Diminished, wasted ; crushed, and flung at last

To native earth, when Earth itself is past.

What need to wonder what time you have lain,

In poignant pain

And solitude of soul, upon the bed

In this neat warm-cloth'd chamber, where the red

Array of firelight throws quaint curtains round

The pictur'd walls ? Enough that you are found :

That one pure hour,

The recollection of your wife had pow'r

To bid you breathe a wish, to sob my name :—

In doubt you sent for me,—in faith I came !

And now, unconscious of my presence yet,

With eyes fast set,

With heavy breath that weighs the solemn air,

And troubled brow that tells of vision'd care,

You toss and turn. Oh Heaven, that you would wake

Awhile to this reality, and take

My trembling hand,

And know for all the Past, this day I stand

In pardon, and forgetfulness :—but No,

You do not comprehend that it is so !

Must I be patient? Then a little while
Will I beguile
The time with mad'ning memories, to enjoy
At last the Present, blessed with an alloy
Of unexpected treasure,—whilst I dote
On bygone injuries, on wounds remote,
And grief intense,
So I may glory in this healing sense,
And revel in a banqueting of bliss,
Because I yet may gain your final kiss !

Oh I remember, as 'twere yesterday,
How in the way
That lovely is to lovers, we two went
Adown cathedral aisles, where flow'rs were spent
In winning wealth beneath my bridal feet,
To bid me trust the Future should be sweet,
As sweet as they :
For I remember that they seem'd to say,
' If Love on Sorrow so shall lightly tread,
A constant incense shall embrace thine head.'

Yea ! I can hear the clarion echo still,
Of your "*I will*"
Which rang in thrilling tones thro' many a span,
Whose sculptured sides in columned graces ran
From font to altar, and from porch to desk :
Kind hands had woven us an arabesque
Of frond, and flow'r,
To deck with perfect grace a perfect hour,
And twine in mated memories, around
A paradise of vision, and of sound.

Far, far within my heart, where gems are hid,
I lift the lid
Upon a void, which was one time filled :
Ah me ! The song that met the gift was stilled
And changed into a moaning by a mound,
When I had lost the treasure I had found :
For Love was wild,
Because Love took thee from me, oh my Child !
And my wet eyes were hungry for the sight
Of thee, and yearned, as darkness yearns for light.

But you were gentle, Husband ; on your breast
You bade me rest,
My tears were dried, you found it joy to kiss
My quiv'ring lips into reposeful bliss :
You loved me with a tenderness unknown
Till Death had taken tribute from our throne.
So there was balm
Anointing me, and in the haven, calm
Beyond the burst of storm upon the sea,
Which bears our vessels to Eternity.

The months were all too short wherein you took
My very look
As spoken words ; for soon, alas ! you slipped
From that high niche where I had always lipped
A prean to you, as to a god-like thing,
An angel in a mortal hovering.

The blinding blow

That beat me breathless in the long ago,
Was soon in falling, and because it fell
I dream'd that Heav'n itself had turn'd to Hell !

My blue veins swell : see how the very thought
My blood has brought
 To boiling, and to sudden overflow :
 In this impulsive fever, to and fro
 I pace the soft-clad floor, whilst yet you sleep.
 Oh God ! give tears, and grant to me to weep,
For even now
 The drops spring strangely to my wrinkled brow,
 And even now, full eager to avenge,
 My thirsty spirit seems to shriek ‘ *Revenge.*’

* * * *

We never met again, the weary years
Oppressed with fears,
 Have crawled on cruel ground, 'mid broken bloom
 And blighted blossom, shifting in the gloom
 Made dark with monstrous mist, and hanging cloud.
 'These wrapped me living in an awful shroud ;
But now I turn
 My face from trouble, and enraptured learn
 That for the goal of grief this hour has been,
 That in your mem'ry yet I reign your Queen !

How the ripe ruddy light illumines the room !
Weird pictures loom
Within the fire-heap'd grate : amid the glow
Strange shapes arise, transforming as they grow
A bridal bell, a casket with a lid,
And now, a structure, old, and ivy-hid ;
A guarded bank,
Ah me ! I seem to hear the very clank
Of chains about the posts, where you and I
Stood idling in those happy times gone by '

Hush ! he is troubled now ; the hour is come

Will he die dumb ?

God ! hear me pray, ' Bid him remember me, '—

The floating film about his eyes I see.

' Belovéd, I am here, and I forgive ;

' Whilst for an instant in my arms you live,

' Speak but a word

' That I may soothe my soul, and know you heard ;

' Ere in your ceaseless silence truth I trace,

' And whelm wet kisses on your pallid face !

' So near to you I am ; your lips move yet,

' They are not set ;

' A look of knowledge kindles in your eyes,

' A wistful look of eloquent surprise :

' No lip, my husband, has impressed mine own

' In all your absence ; none usurped your throne :

' So I may press

' Upon your brow this pledge of faithfulness :

' Do you remember me ? '—You take my hand.

Thank God ! You hear at last,—you understand.

" *My Wife : my wife* "—how these charmed pulses thrill !

Your wife then, still !

And those the first delicious words you said

In that first moment after we were wed :

Are they the last ? Nay, grant me a refrain,

The very air entreats the song again,

" My Wife, my wife ? "

' Dearest ! Our peace remembers not our strife,

In echoed music the Eternal swells

And angels' voices are as wedding bells.'

SONG AND SLEEP.

(A CANTATA.)

Dramatis Personæ.

A Warrior.

The Spirit of Song.

The Spirit of Sleep.

Chorus of Angels.

The Warrior.

My trusty spear
Endures no longer on the dreadful field;
Till aid appear
I lay to earth the banner, and the shield;
Removed is valour, fear torments my heart,
No more may I perform a hero's part.

The mighty foe
Has snatch'd the goblet of my hope away;
His helmets glow,
Whilst hostile forces win a splendid day:
These weapons now must scatter on the ground,
Where grinning victors soon shall gather round.

Chorus of Angels.

A soldier, weary of the Fight,
On yonder field resigns his arms;
No sunrise warms the Eastern height,
His soul is vexed with false alarms:
Despair and Failure dim his eye,
And ev'ry breath begets a sigh.

But Hush, be still! The mandate's given,
Two Spirits hasten from the throng;

Thro' countless ages each has striv'n
 To make the souls of pilgrims strong :
 The soldier now must make his choice,
 Whilst worlds look on without a voice.

The Spirit of Sleep.

With whispers will I woo thine ear,
 As gentle as the stir of wheat,
 When, thro' the rip'ning fields appear,
 The cluster'd marks of Summer's feet :
 My hand upon thy burden'd brow
 Shall be as cool in its caress,
 As those far zephyrs, which endow
 The woods with answ'ring tenderness.
 And thou shalt be a hero yet,
When I have taught thee to forget.

This goblet of the gods is thine,
 Adorn'd with poppies red and rare :
 And thou shalt sip the scented wine,
 Which brims the carven edges there :
 Tall throated Sappho sung its praise
 In liquid lengths of deathless verse,
 And mortal, thou, in lowlier lays,
 Its sweet enchantments must rehearse.
 For thou shalt be a hero yet,
When I have taught thee to forget.

Chorus of Angels.

Oh sunless noon, where spell-bound men
 Will yield to Sleep's delusion !
 Too late she nerves their spirits when
 They waken from illusion :

Who stays to rest, may gather strength,
But war meanwhile is ended,
And wakeful foes have won at length,
What men in dreams defended !

The Warrior.

Delicious Sleep,
To thee I yield,
Whilst shadows steep
The distant field ;
Thy sceptre holds
Eternal sway,
Where mem'ry folds
Her wings away.

When stars light up
Night's lifted brow,
The fairest queen
Of all art thou :
My conscious thought
Take thou to keep,
And hold mine eyes,
Delicious Sleep !

The Spirit of Song.

Be not in haste, Oh foolish mortal stay,
One other Spirit asks thee to obey.

The Warrior.

Bewitched am I to strain my inmost ear,
Melodious measures draw more sweetly near.
Awake is Wonder:—Sleep, remove awhile,
Some tuneful seraph seeks me with a smile.

The Spirit of Song.

For thee I strike the magic chord,
 The noblest Art can e'er afford ;
 I tune for thee my choicest strain,
 To warm thy heart with hope again :
 Come, seize thy sword, nor let it rest
 Till vict'ry swells thy beating breast ; —
 A coward sleeps whene'er he may,
 But heroes die to win the day !

Face thou the Fight 'tis shame to shun,
 In strength complete what strength begun
 Song's dulcet strings for thee are set,
 The fire of zeal must burn thee yet :
 The Battle waits the hero's might,
 'Tis thine to gain the victor's height.
 Come, fling the challenge to thy fears,
 And dare the conflict of the spheres !

The Warrior.

My pulses leap : my blood like fury burns,
 To yonder field my soul responsive turns ;
 I will away, to glory, or to death,
 Do thou attend unto my latest breath,

An Angel.

He fights, he fights
 More nobly than before ;
 The smoking heights
 Return the battle roar ;
 To eager hope,
 The anxious worlds are stirred,
 And ev'ry slope
 Awaits the final word.

Chorus of Angels.

The foe has fled, the vanquished fall,
 Fair Song shall be the queen of all ;
 The warrior gains his proudest hour.
 From realm to realm the trumpets call
 The splendour of the victor's pow'r.

Rouse, rouse, ye sleepers ! Wake, awake !
 The temples of the dreamers shake ;
 Fly forth before th' exulting throng,
 Whilst sleep bows down, and kingdoms take
 Allegiance to the Rule of Song.

Awake, awake ! The vanquished fall,
 And Song is crown'd the queen of all !

—:o:—

A LAMB.

Oh white and woolly,—both woolled and white,
 A lamb stray'd out of the fold last night.

Its tangles caught in a thorny world,—
 Those youthful tangles, all thick and curl'd !

A star looked into the frightened eyes,
 The lamb saw shepherds in Paradise.

Say, What the loss of a twist of wool,
 It made the heat of its heart more cool.

* * * *

A cloister'd dark, but an open morn,
 A fleck of fleece on a cruel thorn :

And is there gladness ? Oh, woolled and white,
 The lamb came back to the fold to-night.

BARNEY.

"Och ! Ye needn't come acourtin' ov me, Barney,
Wid yer 'Darlint,' an' yer 'Honey,' an' yer blarney !

Shure there isn't room for two

In me cabin. Be off, do !

There's the creature there awaitin' ov his meal,

There's the kittle all aswingin' on the keel,

An' the peat's awantin' pickin',

So ye needn't stay there stickin',

An' ye needn't come acourtin' ov me, Barney,

Wid yer 'Darlint,' an' yer 'Honey,' an' yer blarney."

"Troth, Mavourneen ! It's yersilf is moighty cruel,

An' it's *me* 'ud hunt a mile ov bog for fuel ;

If there isn't room for *two*

Won't a bigger cabin do ?

I've got gold enuff to make yer brouht eye blink,

Ye can lind yer ear, an' harken to the chink !

Och ! Yer purty, but Goodbye,

Saints presarve ye whin ye die,

Since ye will be so unsartain-like, an' cruel,

I'll be turnin' ov me back upon ye, Jewel !"

"Och ! Ye needn't be in sich a hurry, Barney,

For me smoilin', an' remarkin' ov yer 'blarney,'

Ye can stip insoide the thatch,

An' be lettin' down the latch :

Shure the Praste won't mind amakin' me a broide,

(Wid a leetle drop rale illigant besoiide) :

Tell the neighbours an' the pig

To be dancin' of a jig,

An' I'll kiss ye for the truth ov all yer blarney,

On the day that I'm aweddin' of ye, Barney."

IN MEMORIAM.

Prince Henry of Battenberg, died Jan. 20th, 1896.

(A copy of the following Poem was graciously accepted by
H.R.H. the Princess Beatrice.)

OH Death Invincible ! Could Love command
Revenge on thee,—his most gigantic Foe ;
No more, for ever, should thy tyrant hand
Uplifted be, to deal the treach'rous blow :
The nation shares the sorrow by the throne,
The hearts of England turn to yonder sea ;
And there are none who mock the grief we own
For this branch fallen from the Royal tree.

In dreamless sleep, the high-born warrior comes,
Across *two* oceans he has heard '*God-speed*,'
And from the proudest of our English homes,
It made sweet music in the hour of need.*
The myrtle wreath is on his pallid brow,
A ship of mourners cleaves the winful wave,
And pensive deeps return the Gallant now
Unto the shelter of a templed grave.

Oh Lonely Lady with the blossoms four,
The spring is clouded with thy years of life ;
The storm-surf breaks in circles on the shore
Where he is missing, who had named thee '*Wife*' ;
But God's Fair Haven is the Sailor's Rest,
And One shall fill the measure of thy need,
Whilst we, who grieve to see thee front the West,
Lean to thy heart to whisper *thee* '*God-speed*.'

* *The Queen's last message to Prince Henry when he left
England, was 'God-speed.'*

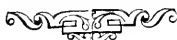
SPRING O' THE YEAR.

SPRING o' the year is here, my darling,
 Pipe me a song from your heart of May ;
 Over a world of opal sunshine
 Love is monarch of all to-day :
 Speak no word of the wild wet winter,
 Keep no thought of the tuneless West,
 For the plaint of the Past is over,
 And 'tis pride in the earth's brown breast.
 Sweetheart come, for the woods are lonely,
 Press the green with your tripping feet ;
 Where the whisper of leaves is only,
 Come, and whisper me once, my sweet.

Spring o' the year is here, my darling,
 Flush of flowers that wake at dawn,
 Misty preludes of noontide glory,
 Magic notes in the throat of morn ;
 Rainbow-drops on the arching grasses,
 Peep of blue o'er the changing hill,
 And a lilt of the April laughter
 Where the showers have brimm'd the rill.
 Sweetheart come, for the woods are lonely ;
 Touch the path with your fairy feet,
 Where the promise of June is only,
 Come, and promise me once, my sweet.

Spring o' the year is here, my darling,
 Hold it deep in your trustful heart ;
 Dally long where the purple lilacs
 Mingle breath in a fragrant part ;

Watch the break of the creamy blossom,
 Pause and dream of an endless May ;
 Take my hand for a pledge of Summer,
 Bid me sing of the Spring for aye.
 Sweetheart come, for the world is lonely,
 Press the path with your tripping feet,
 Where the whisper of love is only,
 Come, and whisper me once, my sweet,



A BREATH.

(Impromptu.)

SEE it floats towards you,
 Misty, faintly fair,
 Catch it on the instant,
 Ha ! It is not there !

Joy is like a breath, Sir,
 Floating fleetly on,
 If I stay to ask you,
 Take it,—it is gone !

L'ENVOI.

Had you dared to kiss me
 But a breath ago ;
 I had laugh'd—and linger'd,
 Now, I answer, ' No ! '

AN OPIUM DREAM.

THE Poppy for forgetfulness and ease ;—

I am bewitch'd by this delicious sleep
Which is not sleep, but a soothed consciousness

Of deep enjoyment, real, and yet unreal.
This is nepenthe, Heaven without death ;

I feel my soul half slipping as it were
From out itself, into an amber air
Concealed by incense, heavy with fresh dew !

I see light rains with iris-tinted eyes,
And wings of blue-lined cloud where shadow dies,

Then looking far, I float, I float away,
I swim in space 'mid woven ether waves
Made warm by virgins' breath—all beautiful.

A king am I, and yonder is my throne ;

It sways upon a billow foam-befrilled,
Dighted with precious gems, and poised o'er ground
Of wheat-hued sand !

Yea, am I not a god ?

My very skin has delicate perfume,

And on my head are gorgeous poppies, wreathed
To form a living crown.

Thro' miles of space
I hear a sensuous singing,—beating back,
And I would listen to the tune awhile.

Chorus of Sirens.

"Witches are we in the midst of the sea,
Dancing in time, to the rattle and chime
Of sand and of stone, where a temple has grown
Crowned to the height, with a mystical light.

Make ready ! Make ready !
 The foam-froth is trod,
 By the feet of a god,
 And he comes,
 Yea ! He comes !”

Chorus of Demons.

“ Monsters are we in the midst of the sea,
 Echoing after, the songs and the laughter
 Of creatures of air, all fragile and fair,
 Dancing in measure, and drinking at leisure.
 Make ready ! Make ready !
 The foam-froth is trod,
 By the feet of a God,
 And He comes,
 Yea ! He comes !”

My heart appreciates mine ear : the waves,
 The land, and air, have constant melody ;
 I will approach unto the wondrous shrine,
 And part the curtains.

Ah ! What do I see ?

A god-built temple, reared alone for me !

There is an altar clothed with satin sheen
 As white as snows : upon it are arrayed

A maze of crystal vases, closely sheathed
 In silver trellis-work : around are seats

Of fragrant wood, bedecked with filmy lace,
 Which at my breath floats upward into space,
 Then drops with noiseless motion to its place,
 Light as is woman's thought,—

Mysterious. . . .

From yon gold arch of ceiling, there are hung
 Small censers, sparkling with a myriad rays
 Of varied colour : I am god of all.

But where the worshippers ?

Advance ! Advance
 To greet your Idol—homage do, to ME !

* * * *

I hear an eerie chanting in the wind,
 A sway of song, a rustle as of robes,
 Whose silken softness sweeps a marble floor,
 And follows tunefully a gracious form
 Of youthful beauty :—but they pass me by
 Unseen, and trail unto some distant shrine,
 Which I must seek, since all that is, is mine.
 I face a quaint carved door,

I swing it wide,
 And pause upon the threshold of a room ;
 At last, at last then, I behold my doom !

Alone SHE sits, on cushions richly piled.
 Wine-tinted, 'broider'd with a magic art
 In scrolls of silver : she, herself, is robed
 In purple raiment, heavy with great folds
 Which bear a gorgeousness of lustrous work,
 Like threaded sunbeams : whilst her tresses roll
 In splendid ripples to her sandalled feet,
 As fair as lilies newly drenched with dew :

Speak, speak to me, Oh Monarch, Oh my Queen !
 I am no more a god, I am a slave
 Enlisted in your service. I am held
 In everlasting thrall, and it shall be

As Life to heed your mandate, and to win
A smile from you.

Oh hear me, I entreat ;
And let your mouth drop honey to my soul,
For Time and Happiness have wings too fleet
To linger long at any mortal's side.

Walls do not make a temple, Heaven itself
Consisteth less of beauty, than of love,

And here is Paradise : I want no harp
To waken into music, I desire

No throne of sapphire in the holy heights,
To lift me o'er the level of the stars :

I will be crowned with lustre from your eyes.

She rises now, she towers, and looks down

Upon me prostrate where her garment folds :
The room grows dark : the luscious air is strained
To catch the echoes, when mine ears have gained
Symphonic preludes to a summer song.

May I not win you, Oh my Beautiful ?

Come nearer to my heart—

A sudden mist

A golden haze, a film of widening flame,—
“*I am a dream, and of a dream I came !*”

A dream ?

A dream ?

Ah ! I remember now. . . .

The Poppy for forgetfulness and ease ;

But Oh, the penance for such joys as these !

A POOL IN A WOOD.

A SATIN gown that folds within a case,
 Where unplucked perfumes have their perfect place,
 This pensive pool reclines in solemn state,
 The beauteous treasure of a kindly fate ;
 Moon-kiss'd by night, leaf-guarded ev'ry day,
 Untouched by foam, and innocent of spray.

Adorned with dustless green, and breaking flow'rs,
 It here defies the aging of the hours ;
 The elves at midnight dance in magic ring,
 And dash the satin with the dews of Spring.
 So Lucifer, at dawning, sees his face
 Reflected in the mirror of its grace.

The thorn, and chestnut, snowdrops, and the fern,
 Thro' ev'ry year, take each their varied turn
 To guard the hem that brims th' enclosing steep,
 Lest noxious morsels on the garment creep ;
 And if the wind meander up and down,
 It frills the edges of the folded gown.

When gorgeous Autumn burns with harmless flame
 Those changing leaves which glory in their shame,
 The myriad members of a fallen throng
 Unite, in pillowed softness, all along.
 Whilst round the robe a rustling note is heard,
 As when the woods by hov'ring wings are stirred,

At last, thro' all the feath'ry white, which falls
 To wrap the dead things in their comely palls,
 Dame Nature hastens, and her love-lit eye
 Beholds this garment open to the sky ;
 Then, since from storm its beauty must be hid,
 With gentle care she drops the icy lid !



A GREETING.

YOUR soul must be a sun-lit river,
 In days when rain is on the hill ;
 And if the forests moan and shiver,
 Yet you shall have your warmth still :
 For tho' no message I can whisper
 More sweet than that which you have heard,
 To lovelier music, oft repeated,
 Your heart to Summer shall be stirred !

Does not the truth of pure devotion
 Grow brighter, as 'tis more revealed ?
 The river drowns within the ocean,
 Where precious jewels are concealed :
 So, if I dare you into combat,
 And vie with you for fealty's throne ;
 Oh, we will laugh together after,
 Because the conquest is—mine own !

AT NELSON'S TOMB.

(Trafalgar, October 21st, 1805.)

TEMPLED in Britain's glorious fane he sleeps,
 Whilst memory thro' all the ages keeps
 A sentinel beside, and dares a breath
 To mar with shame the splendour of his death !
 " England expects," yea, England now demands
 Duty in homage from her foam-kiss'd strands,
 And, where the heir of heroes grasps repose,
 The tear-dew'd green must mingle with the rose.

For why ? Here rests a warrior of the sea,
 A proud protector of Britannia's key,
 Who, for the freedom of his native isle,
 Swept the stern foe, and battled death the while :
 Royal of heart, and conscious of command,
 Against the odds he took his stalwart stand,
 Whilst breathless nations leaned upon his soul,
 And look'd for glory from his strong control.

Sing him no dirge as for a common dust,
 Since he gave triumph to his country's trust,
 But, o'er his ashes, garland thoughts divine,
 As worthiest tribute for so rare a shrine :
 Sound him a note as stately as his own,
 From shore to summit, and from tent to throne,
 And write in gold on his embellish'd page—
 Who noble is, makes nobler ev'ry age !

THE KING'S QUEST.

THUS mus'd the King,—Now flow'ry fares the world,
 The hills are rose-clad, and the seas are pearl'd ;
 In quest of gain the drowsy bees take wing,
 And sail the pastures to the tune of Spring :
 Where shall I find the Spirit of my dreams,
 In whose clear eye an answ'ring Summer gleams ?
 And who shall point me to the fair abode,
 Where, as a jewel, Venus is bestowed ?

Shall I, a warrior, arm me as for fight,
 And seek the conquest of my soul's delight ?
 Shall I go forth, and search a thousand shores
 For that one maiden whom my heart adores ?
 Afar or near, I know not where she dwells,
 On thyme-clad mountains, or in pool-lit dells.
 But in her presence is unconscious pow'r,
 Which yet must lead me to her virgin bow'r !

Straight to the King I saw Apollo speed,
 'Search not,' he cried, 'Thy maiden comes indeed ;
 'Who cherish Love, are they whom he pursues,
 'Else 'tis not theirs to grant him or refuse,
 'For close at hand he works his wondrous will,
 'And sways the sceptre of dominion still !'

Lo, as he ceased, I saw the King arise,
 And look his worship in a maiden's eyes.

BLACK AND WHITE.

DEATH, the Horseman, gallops yonder
 Past the toll-gate newly open,
 Where the burden on His shoulder
 Paid the cherished coin of Time.
 You may hear the iron rhythm
 Of the heels of fast Nonios,
 In the metre of the tempest,
 Breaking thro' the world at midnight,
 Bursting from the breast of Heaven,
 Ravished with a dire revenge.

Hark ! The myrmidons of Pluto,
 In the distance, wait His coming,
 And the seething waves of Lethe
 Boil about the throne of sulphur,
 Where, with tensioned howls, impatient
 Cerberus keeps guard, and watches
 For the feet of that Dread Master,
 Who shall yet o'er-mastered be.

There are universal thunders,
 Shaking all the spheres' foundations,
 Rocking all the mystic arches
 Spreading midway 'twixt horizons.
 There are lightnings, fashioned spear-like,
 Gleaming 'gainst the sides of mountains,
 Piercing all the bloodless bosoms
 Of the broad and heaving forests,
 Which have stretch'd beyond the gardens
 Planted in the long ago.

Eurus breathes : he rends asunder
All the surface of the waters,
Raging underneath the horror
Of two midnights, doubly darken'd
By the forms of Death and Time :
And the arrows of the hail-storm
Smite the targets of creation,
Wounding the black earth, in places
Where a dewy softness dwelleth
From remembrance of the dawn !

Death, the Horseman, gallops yonder :
Hold your breath, Oh Ebon Monster !
Save your spurs, and spare your laughter,
Curse the crew which follows after ;
For you shall not keep your burden,
For your gain is not for ever.
Yea ! your sinewy hands shall sever
From the spoil you clutched so early,
And your greedy eye shall fasten
On the scene that is beyond you,
On the beautiful Eternal
Which in turn, makes Hell for *You*.

Tho' your tainted breath has touched her,
I will swear her soul is whiteness :
Love and Truth had each a temple
In the secret of her dwelling.
She is pure : you *cannot* keep her.
You may gloat on your possession,
But at morning you will miss her,
When you gnash your teeth, and shiver,
When you summon all the furies,

Striking at them with your trident.
Yea ! In vain shall be your anger,
Spirit of the Dreadful Night,
For because her soul is white,
She hath power to escape you,
And she *shall* not be your own !

Lo, I deck'd her with the lilies,
And I twined her hair with jasmine
For our bridal on the morrow,
This sad morrow that shall be :
But you envied me my conquest,
And you thought to take her from me ;
You are riding with her resting
On your shoulder until dawn,
But you cannot be a victor,
For the Strength of God o'ercomes you.
And the Good of God defies you
Where the Christ of God allures !—

Oh my Lov'd one, oh my *Lost* one,—
Nay ! The word shall *not* escape me ;
From the whiteness of your spirit
Comes the whiteness of the morn :
And this star of hope is prelude
To the lighting of the shadows,
'Tis the promise of effulgence
That shall steal on me at dawn,
That shall beckon me to follow,
By the track you left so stainless,
To the Throne beyond the thorn.

Death, the Horseman, rideth yonder,
But his raven locks are shrivelled,
And his haggard eyes look fiercely
Where the Eastern windows lighten :
She is slipping from his keeping,
She is rising up, and onward :
Oh the sound of mocking laughter
From the grisly crew that follows ;
He is writhing : he is wrestling,
And he pants to hold her tightly,
And his sinews strain to grasp her.
Whilst the mane of Mad Nonios
Level with the reins is flying,
And his nostrils crimson-colour'd
Quiver with the force of struggle. . . .

All in vain shall be your spurring,
Spirit of the Dreadful Night,
For her maiden soul is white,
And the Strength of God o'ercomes you,
And the Good of God defies you,
Where the Christ of God allures.

She has risen, on, and upward,
With her bridal gown about her,
To the beckon of the angels
Who are group'd in yonder East.
Steals upon the world a whiteness
Beautiful, serene, and stately,
And the brimming pools in forests
Catch the early grey of morn,
Whilst the stirring wings of songsters
Strike low music from the leaves
Where the silver-spinner weaves.

My Belovéd ! My Belovéd !
 There is light upon the pathway,
 And the Rider Death is vanquished
 At the breaking of the Morn :
 Take the lilies, and the jasmine,
 For our later surer bridal,—
 'Tis the Faith of Resurrection
 That has lit the Star at Dawn :
 And it beckons, and I follow,
 By the track you left so stainless,
 To the Throne beyond the Thorn !



MAY MIDNIGHT.

Beneath the stars I stand, and worship Midnight—
 The dark dumb sister of the blatant day ;
 The world is mine, the vineyards, and the orchards,
 With mists of snow upon a half-lit way :
 The boughs are blind, for whiteness seals their vision,
 The bees are sleeping in their latticed tents,
 And in a dream, beyond the Western border,
 A warmer dawn of yester's chill repents.

The moon sails fair upon a waveless ocean,
 Where starry spray is fixed in high embrace :
 Her silver prow divides the azure billows,
 But in her track no troubled foam finds place ;

The woods of May grow lustrous and responsive
Unto the splendour slanting from her side,
And pearly dew, thick-clustered on the grasses,
Reflect her image, and are satisfied.

Modest is Night : she kneels among the shadows,
She breathes in whispers passing thro' the leaves :
Her gown drops lightly on the rim of rivers,
And trails on floors enwrapt with mossy sheaves :
About her feet a smoke of incense rises
In mute atonement for the faults of noon ;
And in her hands she folds Day's gaudy vesture,
Beyond the vision of the virgin moon.

From out her heart Hope looks upon the sleepers
That wait in patience 'neath the daisied sod :
They know her form, for all have been together,
And all are silent at the Will of God :
Yea, Night and Death have each a star to light them,—
The one clear orb which triumphs o'er the rest ;
It gleams resplendent o'er a dark'ning water,
And spreads its brilliance on a Fading West.

Oh, paint no pictures of meridian glory,
When noonday blushes at the thought of night ;
Oh, tell no stories of the dazzling glitter
That floods the pastures with too fierce a light :
But on a canvas throw the charm of darkness,
The regal beauty of a world asleep,
Whilst quiet hills in distances look upward,
And slumbrous waters tinkle down the steep.

TO A FAIRY.

Dainty Darling sweet and slight,
 Swinging thro' the morning light,
 In your hammock, up and down :
 Tell me all your tender thought,
 Where the sun your curls hath caught,
 Turning them to ropes of gold.
 Do you dream of robbers bold,
 Or of treasure come to town,
 Whilst you're swinging up and down ?
 Up and down.

Do you wonder what you'll be
 When you're twenty years and three,
 Will you ever think of *me* ?
 Dainty Darling, sweet and slight,
 Swinging thro' the morning light.

Pretty Fairy, robed in white,
 Half a mortal, half a sprite :
 Swaying in the Summer wind,
 Talking, Oh, so tenderly,
 To the doll upon your knee :
 Crooning gentle lullabies,
 With devotion in your eyes.
 What young fancies hold your mind
 Whilst you're swinging in the wind ?
 In the wind.

Oh, I guess that some day you,
 When you're old enough to woo,
 Will just dream as maidens do,
 Pretty Fairy, robed in white,
 Half a mortal, half a sprite.

Tiny Torment, save the sigh,
 Kiss me darling for 'Goodbye'
 Ere I leave you here alone.
 Shall I find you just as sweet,
 When your gowns are to your feet,
 When you've grown both tall and shy,
 And the curls are rolled up high?
 Will you ever blush and own,
 That I kissed you here alone!
All alone.
 Then perhaps some happy day,
 You will let me kneel, and say
 All the words that lovers may ;
 Tiny Torment, Do not cry!
 Let me win you by-and-by.



THE DREAMERS.

Beware of Dreams !—The thunder of the seas,
 The tramp of feet, the roar of clank and wheel,
 And all the voices of the throngs, reveal
 That trumpet-measure blazoned on the breeze.
 Yet some defy such heralds, knowing these
 Destroy and smite, as with an iron heel,
 The men who labour, if they dare to feel
 When Nature groans, because none take their ease.
 What were the world without its Dreamers now?
 They toil in trance for power which is to be;
 And secret thought has sweat upon her brow,
 Wet bloom of fruits that other days will see.
 Then let the Dreamers dream with shaded eyes,
 For when they wake the world will be more wise.

A CORNER.

I KNOW a rose-wreathed corner,
 The sweetest in the world ;
 Where at the gloam of Summer,
 The bracken is unfurled :
 A wicket gate swings easy,
 Between this hedge and that ;
 At morning soars the songster,
 At gloaming wheels the bat.

On either side the angle
 A cottage peeps between ;
 It's porch is low, and vine-clad,
 And tumbled o'er with green :
 You hear the bees make murmur
 In thickened throngs all day ;
 They know the dew lacks sweetness
 The other side the way !

The casements barred with whiteness
 Blow open to the South ;
 Where zephyrs gain the warmth
 Of kisses on the mouth :
 The fashion of the flowers
 Is dainty as you please,
 They grow in glorious clusters,
 They blossom at their ease.

And as you breathe the '*Lads' Love*,
 And wander by the thyme,
 Or pause where flowers nestle
 In tangles more sublime,

You have your dreams of Eden,
You hum an old-world tune,
And think of bygone faces
That looked on these in June.

Above the garden perfume,
And o'er the unclosed latch,
The roof leans in and outward,
A melody in thatch :
The sunshine slants upon it
From dawning until gloam,
When with a benediction
The sleepy day goes home.

The quaint uneven chimney,—
Its breath is faintly blue,—
Leans out to the horizon,
As if to catch the view :
Red roses twine around it,
And flood the roof at hand,
Till Heaven dries the petals,
To scent the autumn land.

* * * *

Give me a rose-wreathed cottage,
A corner warm and still,
Where I may gloat on summer
And wander at my will :
For it shall be a mansion,
Where Nature's gold is spent,
A pyramid of pleasure,
An altar of content !

NARCISSUS.

He saw in a Thespian fountain
 The face of a beautiful maid ;
 He haunted the ravishing crystal,
 And worshipped the dew-sprinkled shade.

No vintage nor feast could entice him
 To stir from the image, which lay
 Enshrined in the heart of the waters,
 And throwing sweet kisses in spray.

Her face echoed thoughts which he cherished,
 Her eyes seemed to hold his desire ;
 But Oh, she ne'er moved from the surface
 Of coolness that set him on fire !

Green Helicon's height was neglected,
 The praises of gods were unsung ;
 No more, in the home of the Muses,
 The lyre of Narcissus was strung.

He pined o'er a beautiful shadow,
 He spake, but no answer was heard,
 And only the sigh of the ripples
 Seemed heeding his eloquent word.

At last, in despair at her silence,
 He killed himself, close to her throne,
 For how could he know that the image,
 Those lips and those eyes, were his own ?

The nymphs, bare of foot, and loose-girdled,
 Built high a funereal pile,
 Their tears for the Son of Cephisis
 Half watered the branches the while.

But when they would bring his young body
 To burn on the Priest-tended height,
 They found but the delicate flower
 We know to be scented and white.



PIANISSIMO.

HIE, Sir !

Now, Why are you so shy, Sir ?
 I've often said a sweet ' Good-day,'
 And smiled at you across the way,
 As no one can deny, Sir.

Fie, Sir !

I wish you wouldn't sigh, Sir :—
 If you have aught you'd like to say,
I've smil'd at you across the way,—
 I s'pose you don't know Why, Sir ?

Hie, Sir !

I'm sorry you're so shy, Sir :
I like you ! There now ! Let it pass.
 You do not understand A-las (s),
 Good-morrow, and Good-bye, Sir !

A SONG OF BUILDING.*

(Written for the ceremony of laying the Foundation-stone of the new wing of the Guildhall School of Music.)

GONE is the Olympic splendour,
 Hellas shields the gods no more ;
 But a mightier glory rules us
 Than the mystic rites of yore :
 Now the panpipes of the shepherds
 And the brazen trumps of Rome
 Yield to a diviner music
 In the holier aisles of Home.
 Concord charms the vales of Tempe,
 Whilst the tone-notes of the spheres
 Roll above the stately fabrics,
 Which a generous age uprears.

Now, upon a firm foundation,
 We have laid another stone ;
 Soon will rise a noble dwelling,
 That shall be the Muses' own :
 Here the glory of Apollo,
 And the splendour of the Nine
 Must inspire the Isles with homage,
 For the Art which is Divine.
 So the Attic gifts descending
 From the templed fires of old,
 Shall add lustre to the laurels,
 Which the sons of Britain hold.

* Set to Music by Mr. W. H. Cummings.

MAC-IAN OF GLENCOE.

FAINT the Battle thunder sounded
 Where the Limerick lines were broken ;
 From the Boyne, a year defeated,
 James had fled, by few surrounded.
 For 'surrender' had been spoken,
 And the Stuarts had retreated,
 Whilst the Holland hearts rebounded
 For the King, so strongly seated
 On the good old English throne !

*'Ere this year has passed for ever,
 Scottish Chiefs shall all surrender;
 They shall swear me, now, or never,
 Monarch of the Isles, Defender
 Of the Faith, and no Pretender
 Shall have rule, whilst Rule I own !*

*Breadalbane shall have his thousands,
 He must buy the Chieftains over;
 I will still their restless warring,
 And the mad desire for battle,
 Cannon-roar, and musket-rattle.'*

So the order, firmly spoken,
 Went from William, and in token
 Of Allegiance, all the Chieftains
 Bent the knee, and swore submission—
 All but one. . . .
 Out spake Mac-Ian
 Leader of the Clan Macdonald ;—

See I live a valiant scion
Of my sires : Sir Marquis, No,
We are Foes from long ago. . . .

But the year was near its ending
When Mac-Ian thus bethought him ;—
‘ Shall I, to their Death be sending
‘ Honest men, whose ears attending
‘ Only to the words I say,
‘ Breathe to serve me, and obey?
‘ Out of spite to mine own Foe,
‘ Should the Clan be merged in dangers?
‘ Breadalbane, as all men know
‘ Be they Argyle-born, or strangers
‘ Is mine enemy, and so
‘ Have I yet refrained from peace,
‘ But defiance now must cease.’ . . .

Fast he gat him to the fort
Asking there the boon he sought,
‘ I am come to swear allegiance,’
Vowed he, ‘and the true obedience
Of my Clan.’

‘ Ha ! you are late,
Quoth the Captain at the gate.
‘ Get you yonder unto Argyle,
‘ Past the mountains, and the waters,
‘ For the sake of sons and daughters,
‘ Get you on, and get you on !’

As he spake the Chief was gone.

Some few hours the year had ended,
When Mac-Ian reached the goal,

Bare of breath, but staunch of soul ;
And he cried 'For man and man,
' Chieftain of Macdonald's Clan,
' Come I here, this day to measure
' Words to fit the King's good pleasure :
' Give me pardon for delay,
' Long and toilsome was the way,
' But I wait to take the vow,
' Give it here, and give it now !'

Quoth the Sheriff of Argyle,
' You may swear sir, if you will,
' For the King, God bless him, rules us
' With no harsh tyrannic sway,
' He will pardon your delay.'

So the Chieftain knelt for William,
And his anxious heart grew gay,
When the Sheriff clapped his shoulder
In a fair familiar way,
Crying 'Back to Wild Glencoe,
' Hie you to your Clan, and say
' We are all at peace this day !'

Then Mac-Ian gat him homeward,
'Mid the silence of the waters,
'Mid the vastness of the spaces,
And the dumbness of the woods :
Yea, his soul was glad within him,
For the Clansmen all went singing
Through the weeks, that followed after
His allegiance to the King.

To Glencoe soon came the Campbells,
With the sounding of a drum ;
'We are friends !' They cried together,
'And for friendship have we come.'
'Welcome then,' replied Mac-Ian,
'Whosoever each may be.
'There is room for such as ye !'

So they made their homes together,
Half a moon-time, in the winter,
And the ruddy fires were kindled,
And the pipes brake merry music
For the dancers' steps to mingle,
Whilst the mountain and the dingle
Echoed back the songs of virgins,
Chanted in a lofty treble
O'er the deep notes of the warriors,
Joining in a full refrain,
Hurling back the tune again !

But Glencoe's thick woods were still
On the morning of a morrow ;
Fireless cots were strangely chill,
For the streams ran red with sorrow,
Where Mac-Ian, wan of face,
Strove with Death to win a race,
And thrice twelve of the Macdonalds
Lay half-limbed, too still beside him,
Evermore to heed his word.

Tell but once this ghastly story,
Haunted by historic glory ;
In the Pass of grim Glencoe
Dropped the dozens of the slain,

Murdered in an awful midnight
That can never be again.

There the traitors rose up thirsty
For the blood of those who served them ;
And they struck them in their sleep,
There was scarce a soul to weep.

So Mac-Ian with a sigh
Turned him to the dawn to die.



BECAUSE.

It is not that the world is gay,
Or that the skies are bright ;
Or that the clouds which loomed so gray
Are lined with living light :
I do not sing for these : Ah no !
But just because I love you so.

It is not that the burnie slips
'Twixt sands of shaded gold ;
Or that the roses' crimson lips
To warmer winds unfold :
I do not sing for these : Ah no !
But just because I love you so.

And if the roar of storm should break
In forests now so still ;
And if the summer breeze should wake
To tempest on the hill :
I shall not fear for these : Ah no !
For, evermore, I love you so.

CHIMES.

THERE are some sweet-tuned bells set softly ringing
 In holier places than in ivied tow'rs :
 When gentle words, and sympathy's caresses,
 Fall on the ropes within these lives of ours.
 Who does not know the rapture of such music,
 And love the mem'ry of such perfect themes ?
 Adown the aisles of distant Time they echo,
 Till they are heard again in angels' dreams.

Ah ! unto each, one other can give blessing—
 Song for the ear, or beauty for the eye :
 And even tears may form an unknown cadence,
 In tuneless hearts, when storm is sweeping by.
 Not all can view the glory of the morning,
 Upon the height of some majestic hill ;
 But surely those who dwell among the valleys
 May see the sun-rise in some rippling rill.

Beauty there is for those who look around them,
 And, when men pause, and strain their weary ears,
 Even in scenes where discord is a master,
 They may perceive the music of the years :
 And, as when bell meets bell in merry madness,
 And softer echoes float upon the air,
 So, soul to soul, may give an answering sweetness,
 And echoes bless the loneliness elsewhere.

Oh, if we guessed how often we might capture
Tone from the unstirr'd bells we never hear :
Would not our eager hands be swift to gather,
The rusty chains that sometimes hang so near ?
To many a temple, if there were but ringers,
The world would look, and wonder at the tune,
And in some lives perchance a rarer music
Would charm December, than was heard in June.



THE MINSTREL.

‘ SWING your harp from off your shoulder
Strike anew its magic strings ;
Yonder, in the castle turret,
Isabel, my lady, sings :
‘ Tho’ I hie me to the battle,
She would have me hear but song,
Till from thunder-roar and rattle
Safely I return ere long.’

Sprang the Prince upon his charger,
Waved the white flag in the air,
Whilst the tear-drops of his lady
Glistened on the ensign there :
Ho, away ! The steed has vanished,
Isabella’s voice is still ;
But the Minstrel, ever faithful,
Tunes his harp upon the hill.

Thro' the weary weeks he lingered,
 First at morning, last at gloam ;
 And he played her martial music
 As of victors coming home :
 Till she leaned from out her lattice
 With a lustre in her eye,
 Half-expectant, o'er the distance,
 Steed and warrior to descry.

‘ Oh, he comes not yet ? ’ she murmured
 ‘ Patience,’ quoth the Troubadour,
 ‘ Harken to the faithful story,
 ‘ Of a Spanish maid of yore : ’
 So she listened, whilst he poured her
 Dulcet notes to fit his theme ;
 Till she dropped to blissful slumber,
 And the dreaming of a dream.

‘ Wake ! Awake ! The Prince is coming : ’
 Cried the Minstrel, loud at last ;
 And he swung his harp upon him,
 As he heard the trumpet blast :
 ‘ Stay thou there ! ’ laughed Isabella,
 ‘ Stay, and greet my gallant Knight.’
 But the Troubadour had vanished
 In a trail of wondrous light.

Then, as forth the Prince came riding
 With the conquest on his brow ;
 Lo, she heard an Angel whisper,
 ‘ I have watched thee until now ;
 ‘ In thy sadness I gave music,
 ‘ In thy silence made thee strong ;
 ‘ *But they have no need of singers*
 ‘ *Who themselves can chant the song.*’

A FEBRUARY NOON.

WHAT do you see, Oh eyes
 That look through the unlit lattice,
 Thick with a mist of rain
 And white with the wet of dew ?
 Are you afraid of gloom,
 Of dripping eaves, and the mosses
 Drinking the wine of God,
 But growing in green anew ?

‘’Tis chill in the watery meadows,
 We tire of the leafless gray,
 We hunger for drifting yellow
 To float on a bee-kissed way :
 The Orient lights no altars,
 The priest of the morn sleeps long,
 And never a pointed pinion
 Goes up with a burst of song.’

What do you hear, Oh ears
 That hark by the roseless porches,
 Dark with a slant of dusk,
 And lone for the loss of tune ?
 Are you afraid of the hush,
 That dwells in the sombre ivy
 Hiding the nests of birds,
 But holding the lore of June ?

‘’Tis still in the thrush’s chamber,
 We pine for a minstrel’s note,
 We hunger for tangled concords
 To pour from a plumaged throat :

The gloaming has lost the sister
 Who warbled the Attic tale :
 And never a fire of sunset,
 At sound of her voice grows pale.'

Oh eyes at the unlit lattice,
 Oh ears at the roseless porch,
 Hope stands where the drifts are falling
 And kindles a flaming torch :—
 Be bright for the good of others,
 Be quick at the sigh of pain,
 And into your heart of hearts, Friend,
 The Summer will come again.

For days may be dark for beauty,
 As silence is meet for song :
 And the souls that are fair for duty
 Are sunny, and sweet, and strong.



MOTHER'S DOLL.

WHAT have you on your knee, dear,
 And why do you tend it so ?
 Do you guess 'twas your Mother's doll, dear,
 Many a year ago ?
 Once, in the Past, she loved it,
 A fair-faced waxen thing,
 When all the world was happy,
 And Life was at the Spring.

Sail to the shore of sleep, dear,
With the old doll in your hand ;
Some day, when the years grow older,
You will wake, and will understand.

Mother was once a doll, dear,
Loved for her dainty face ;
Robed on a summer morning
In satin, and silk, and lace.
She had trundled her toys away, dear,
And the old doll out of sight ;
Ah me ! Has it felt as weary
As my heart does to-night ?

You have sailed to the shore of sleep, dear,
With the old doll in your hand ;
Some day, when the years grow older,
You will wake, and will understand

Mother was left alone, dear,
When somebody else grew tired ;
There was many another plaything
Waiting to be admired :
So the silver stole to her hair, dear,
And her eyes grew wet with dew,
But the angels see her smile, dear,
Whenever she looks at you.

Mother will sail to sleep, dear,
Some day, you will hold her hand ;
And, just when the Day is breaking,
She will wake, and will understand.

TEMPTATION.

Scene—A country churchyard at gloaming. Catherine discovered mourning at the grave of her parents. Enter Lucifer in the guise of a persuasive lover.

Catherine (alone).

Fair this bloom is, but not fairer
 Than the thoughts ye left behind
 In the chamber of my mind :
 In the memories of springtimes,
 And of summers, and of winters,
 When your souls to mine were kind !

Lucifer (entering).

Shadows in the silent West
 Where the crimson flush is dead,
 Where the wings of warmth have fled ;
 There is mist upon the lea,
 There is anger on the sea,
 Chill, and cloud,
 Shriek, and shroud,
 What are these to you and me ?

Catherine.

Ask me not ! The hour is holy,
 Sweet is shade to those who grieve :
 For it mocks not those who sorrow,
 But seems rather to receive
 Somewhat of their grief and pain,
 And in pity, yield refrain !

Lucifer.

Yet these tombs are not as bowers
For the living. Come away :
Long enough your eyes have lingered
On these stones of white and gray.
Leave your tears, for once, behind
With the moaning of the wind,
With the deaf, and with the blind :
Leave the Idle to their sleep,
Where the rustling willows weep,
Come away,
You may mourn another day.

Catherine.

Ah! you know not what you say.
Wherefore should I come away?
Bid me calm my soul with Trust.
These are dead, and die we must :
But the End is the Beginning
And the vast eternal winning
Of the soul's unfolding beauty,
Of the recompense of duty.

Lucifer.

Living, live, and loving, love,
Sigh the hurrying clouds above ;
Get you bliss the while you may,
Living, let us love for aye,
Loving, let us laugh To-day.
For we know not, Ha! we know not
Anything of all the Future.
Press the grape, and drink the wine,
Ere the snows be on the vine.

Catherine.

Still your tongue, and rein your speech,
 Doubt too ready is to teach :
 If you hold no nobler vision,
 Stay your words of vain derision.
 Shall I lose a hope of bliss
 In the gaining of your kiss ?
 Shall I listen to your pleading,
 And uncaring, and unheeding,
 Fling my fling with Life and Time,
 Frame a song, and set a chime
 As a knell, to things sublime ?

Lucifer.

When these hearts are turned to dust
 Flying o'er some heated plain ;
 Do you tell me that they must
 Meet your very own again ?
 Nay, and nay !
 Keep your simple fancies, pray,
 Live and love the while you may,
 Take my hand, and come away.

Catherine.

No ! I will not ! Who are you ?
 Will you teach me how to woo
 Glamour out of worlds of gloom ?
 Will you kiss me in my sorrow,
 And forgetting the To-morrow,
 Win me but to dance and die !—
 You and I,
 Were we made to dance and die,
 Were we made to breathe and sicken
 Into graves that have no door,
 Into Silence,—evermore ?

Lucifer.

What is sweeter than a sleep?—
 When the heart is old and weary,
 When the years are growing dreary;
 Just to sleep : and to be certain
 That no Future lifts the curtain
 On some terror, on some wonder,
 Waken'd by Millennium thunder :—
 On some awful sudden sight
 That shall make us quake with fright.
 Sleep it is that *you* call Death,
 Dreamless sleep without a breath :
 They have done their part who win it,
 And there is no memory in it,
 Neither hope, nor thought at all,
 To embolden, or appal !

Catherine.

Go !

For why will you tempt me so ?
 Take your haunting face away,
 Leave me here to watch and pray.

Lucifer.

All the dead have had their hour,
 They have plucked the honied flow'r
 They have spent the gold of pleasure,
 They are lost in endless leisure
 In the gardens, lone and grim,
 Set with many a stony rim !

Catherine (rising distractedly).

If the words of Truth be in you—

Lucifer (taking her hand).

See, the purple of the wine
 Waits for lips that look divine.
 Chill, and cloud,
 Shrick, and shroud.
 What are these to you and me ?
 There is love-light on the lea,
 There is silver on the sea,
 Laughter in a sunny isle,
 Mystic measures all the while
 Soft and low,
 Which you never thought to know,
 Ringing, singing in your ears,
 Chiming round a chain of years.
 Come along ! Come along !
 Here is Mist, but *there* is Song !

An Angel (unseen).

“ Multitudes whom none can number
 Chant beside the crystal sea ! ”

Catherine (wrenching away her hand).

Get you to your love and laughter,
 By the Christ, I come not after !
 You have lied the Lie of lies.
 By the star that lights yon skies,
 Which you made not,
 Which you quench not,
 Which you *cannot* tear asunder.
 There must be Millennium Thunder.

Lucifer (preparing to retreat).

Ha ! You are too weak a mortal
 To be strong by this green portal ;—

To have reason for your might :
 What ? And are you mad to-night ?
 Is your fair face to be shrouded
 By a mind for ever clouded ?

Catherine (regardless).

As the harvesting of clusters,
 As the battle-note of triumph,
 As a burst of massive concords
 After minor notes of prelude,
 It shall fling the worlds to Summer
 And the souls unto the bosom
 Of God's Hope, and Resurrection
 Shall be mightier than the demons. . . .

Lucifer (retreating).

Curses on you, wild, delirious
 Daughter of decaying mortals !

Catherine (following).

Yea, the souls of those who love us
 Will steal happy from the Glory,
 And their wings shall wrap our faces
 Lest the new light be too awful ;
 But the Spirits of the Darkness
 Shall be blinded,—on a sudden.

Lucifer (vanishing).

Curses on you !—

Catherine (kneeling).

Lord, I thank Thee
 That Thou openest the door
 Of all graves for evermore !

THE WIND IN THE WHEAT.

Oh Wind in the gold-tufted wheat,
 Woo never a rose on the hedges of thorn,
 But stay with the Lover, whose heart is new-born,
 To kneel, as a slave, at her feet.

If she come at the morn you must tell of the dew,
 Till she thirst for the sweets that are tranquil and true
 As the drop on the lip of a bloom :
 If she come at the noon, you must whisper of peace
 Caressing the world, when Love's blessings increase,
 And the glory has vanquished the noon :
 But if she should come when the gloaming is nigh,
 Then bid her look up to the Hope in the sky !

Oh Wind in the gold-tufted wheat,
 Say never a word to the world for to-day,
 But loiter at hand in your tenderest way,
 And pause where the upland is sweet :

For her soul is the bud that is fairest at morn,
 And Love, like a crystal, must newly be born
 To sink in the deep of her heart :
 The beauteous warmth of her spirit must be
 The noon, where in silence perchance she'll agree
 That Love has content for his part :
 But if, by a frown, she should darken the Light,
 Her smile like the star, will breathe Hope in the night.

Oh Wind in the gold-tufted wheat,
 Go, worship the roses, go, wander the miles
 And spread the glad message—she answers, she smiles,
 For I am the King at her feet !

ODE

TO

W. H. CUMMINGS, ESQ., HON. R.A.M., F.S.A.

(Written on the occasion of his election as Principal of the Guildhall School of Music, and recited at the Banquet given in his honour.)

Son of the West, and Nursling of the East,
The honoured hero of this Muse-link'd feast,
Thou, who hast touched with skill so many strings,
And sipped the wisdom from historic springs :
Here would we breathe a tribute to thy name,
And add new lustre to thy worthy fame.

What tho' the Attic glow no more inspire
The priests of Hellas with exultant fire !
If Grecian temples celebrate no more
A Victor's triumph, as in days of yore !
Now, on the ashes of such rites we raise
A loftier incense, a sincerer praise.

Backward we trace thy footsteps thro' the years,
Marking the changeful music of the spheres.
Beneath the dome that crowns the City's pride,
Thy voice was heard, the muse was satisfied ;
Amalthea's horn was emptied on thy head,
And wider ways before thy vision spread.

Fostered in scenes that royally rejoice
O'er memories of Purcell and of Boyce,
With every breath, thy youthfulness attained
A fuller glimpse of what the Past had gained ;
And, jealous of its splendour, thou hast reared
A larger reverence for names revered.

Cathedral transepts welcomed the sweet sound
When chief among the minstrels thou wast found,
In song's seraphic realm thou hadst a throne,
And thro' two worlds thy cultured gift was known ;
So, in the different eras of thine age,
Fame wrote thee worthy on each varied page

Divine Cecilia wooed thy hands to bring
A flood of chords from her world-offering ;
And hearing once her sweet approving word,
An answering echo on thy spirit stirred,
Until, in lengths of pure, melodious tune,
Thou gavest us the symphonies of June.

Fair, fragrant music drifted from thy pen,
—For Psyche met with gentle Orpheus then—
And there was beauty in thy charmed refrain,
As tho' the breath of orchards came again
In memory, across Devonian miles,
Where Dartmoor frowns, and the Rhine-rival smiles.

And once beneath the moon, at midnight hours,
When dainty elves danced lightly on the flowers,
Some airy shapes bewitched thee on the wing,
With the sweet music of "The Fairy Ring":
Ah, still, we guess, attendant spirits hear
The strains they taught thee in their circled sphere.

So on Life's road at every turn it seems,
Apollo lingered with his cultured themes :
And thou, an ardent student of them all,
With joy responded to Minerva's call ;
The spring of years receded, but there came
The riper glory of meridian flame.

In days when Rome was loftily enthroned,
Virtue and Honour each a temple owned,
But Honour's threshold only could be gained
By those who had in Virtue's courts remained ;
That happy truth is true of thee to-day,
Thou hast reached Honour by a virtuous way.

For not alone have Learning's highways caught
The close attention of devoted thought ;
The orphaned poor, the friendless and the blind
Have each found place in thy responsive mind.—
The cynic scorn which makes men's hearts grow cold
Has had no portion in thy finer mould.

Student at all times, though a Master now,
Long may the laurels linger on thy brow :
In the new sphere where young disciples wait
Thy welcome entrance at the City Gate,
Long may'st thou reign, a Minister of Art,
Where strength and sweetness shall have equal part.

Take for remembrance every kindly thought
Nourished by Knowledge, and by Friendship brought :
Chronos may fly, and Sappho may be still,
Yet, shalt thou hear the music of Goodwill.
For those who love thee much, shall do no wrong,
And those who "Love thee little, shall love long."



A MARCH WIND.

Oh Hey!

There's a maiden's pretty bonnet, and it's blown away,
 And the feathers, and the strings,
 Have betaken to them wings,
 And its Hey, Oh Ho,
 For the wind doth blow,
 The lassie is affrighted,
 Her bonnet is benighted,
 And her fairy feet are flying,
 As nobody's denying ;—
 But she will not win the race,
 For the feathers, and the lace,
 Have trundled in their grace,
 Into space !

Oh Hey!

Now, what do you imagine a Gallant found to-day ?
 Why, a maiden's pretty bonnet,
 Without anything upon it ;
 And it's Hey, Oh Ho,
 For the wind doth blow.
 The lassie was affrighted,
 Her bonnet was be(k)nighted,
 And her hair was all alying,
 As nobody's denying,—
 But she looked both young and fair,
 And he thought her so I swear
 When she blushed, and thanked him there,
 For his care !

Oh Hey !

There is going to be a wedding very soon, they say :

When the Gallant found the bonnet,

There was *Cupid's bow* upon it,

And it's Hey, Oh Ho,

When the winds do blow.

Now what lass will be affrighted,

When her bonnet is benighted ?

Ah ! not any that I know,

For the wedding bells will go,

And young hearts must run away,

Just like bonnets, so I say,

And as many more as may,

Oh Hey !



A DEW DROP ON A LEAF.

A LIQUID star upon a curve of green,

And there the mystery of morn is seen :

A tiny tear, that left some elfin-eye,

When the witch dreamed of daybreak in the sky.

A trembling token of tremendous care,

When thirsty bees shall sip the nectar there.

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Star, tear, and token,—such is Life and Death,

And so we answer to God's lightest breath.

THE BIRTH OF LOVE.

How shall I fitly strike the lyre for thee,
 And sing aloud the welcoming of Love?
 Lo! I have dwelt on shores without a sea,
 And looked on tedious skies that stretched above
 With just so much of light, so much of dark :
 In yon rose-coppice there was red, I knew,
 It blushed at dawn, it bore a tear at eve,
 But little cared I where the ripest grew,
 Or where the nightingale found space to grieve
 When on the damask dusk had set its mark,
 And day went sailing in a moon-lit ark.

If I were gay, it was with simple joys
 Which lit mine eyes awhile, but left my heart
 Exactly measured to its erstwhile poise,
 Since it had learned not to take newer part
 In this world's rhythm : so the days passed on,
 The lilies died : the Summer ebbed away ;
 I clutched the orchard fruits, and saw the leaves
 Return from green to gold, from gold to gray,
 Until they fluttered from beneath the eaves :
 Then I was sorry that the Spring had gone,
 And that no more the spangled meadows shone.

But once, a Day dawned, beautiful indeed,
 When, to the empty cavern of my soul,
 A splendid ocean, like an eager steed,
 Came rushing on, impatient of control ;

Then watching I awoke—and waking sighed,
For destiny was on me, and the fate
That is to each a birthright, marked me out
As if an heir to glorious estate.
Behold, Love cancelled every debt of doubt ;
And so I looked where Eden should abide,
For in your promise I was satisfied.

How vast the change is ! Warm, and true, and deep,
The sea is round about me, and I feel
Love spring in freshness from his couch of sleep,
Whereon the gods in mated laughter kneel
To watch the lashes lifting from his cheek !
Now every sky is burning with a noon,
And every hope has mid-day for its goal,
And there are lovelier places 'neath the moon
Than ever smote their beauty on my soul,
In those old times, when darkness was too bleak
To lure a look from me, or make me speak.

Entranced the coppice is with thick of bloom ;
Thinking of thee, Belov'd, I wander there ;
When early buds drop incense to the gloom,
I mark the blossoms with peculiar care,
And choose the queenliest flow'r ; that it may rest
Upon my bosom to bewitch your eye,
To make me seem more fair perchance to thee :—
That so thy sight may not thine heart deny,
That so thine ev'ry thought may turn to me ;
For were I less than *all*, faith's giant crest
Must hide in mist beneath a starless West.

But :—Are you there, Belov'd? How sweet in this
New sense of senses ; this tremendous trust,

Which places Heaven in a single kiss,
And throws a glory o'er each tread of dust.

I hear the lark go singing as he soars,
And I bethink me, at the peep of morn,
I know a dearer song, that I can trill

Beside this sea, where song itself is born
To stay the world from doubt's congealing chill.

Then, in a silence, my own heart adores
The very whisper that has made me yours.

What do I ask of thee who art mine own,
Oh Prince, whose coming holds my feet in thrall?—

Let me, Belovéd, be to thee a throne,
That I may lift thee higher over all ;

That just because of me, thine head may tower
King-like above the rest ; and thou, full soon,
Be nobler, wiser, gentler for the height

That I shall lure thee to : Oh such a boon
Were evermore my infinite delight,

For thus I claim, as guerdon of my power,
The chief instalment of a precious dower.

So let me, Dearest, closer cling to thee,
And tell thee all 'tis thine alone to know ;

For I would win thy tongue to speech, and be
A trainer of thy thought, amid the glow

Of this fair Summer : Yea, I ask no more
Than that thou turn to me when thou art lone,
Or when the shafts of Life too fiercely fall ;

Then will I make thine ev'ry grief mine own,
And find some tender comfort for them all,—

A stretch of dawn where darkness kept the shore,
A gift of sleep where vigil was before.

A SHOWER.

DON'T you love the flood of the rains, my dears,
 When the crisp leaves lean to the grass ;
 And there's nothing in all the world to do,
 With a tiny lad and a lass,
 But to let you laugh right under a tree,
 And look as it were at a shining sea
 Set wrong way up in the air !

Don't you love the flood of the rains, my dears,
 When the birds take tea overhead ;
 And talk to each other, sharp and shrill,
 About what a bad world said
 When an April shower had drenched its skirts,
 And taken the starch right out of its shirts
 Which pointed up to the sky.

Don't you love the flood of the rains, my dears,
 When a cloud unfastens the blind ;
 And you in your tuckers and snowy snoods,
 Get caught in an irised wind :
 What fun, my darlings, to squeeze up tight,
 And watch 'neath the roof of a green-leav'd height
 These dew-drops full on the wing.

RECONCILIATION.

WHAT shall I say to charm away your sadness,
 To light your eye with Hope's seraphic fire :
 How shall I speak to storm your soul with gladness,
 And wrap your world in Summer's green attire ?
 When you remember, once, I had not asked you,
 Once it was mine to spurn you with a smile :
 Will you so sadly look away to Westward,
 And picture rain on ev'ry future mile ?
 Say me a word, and I will set the tune, dear,
 The harp shall sound, and give a glad refrain,
 And you shall hear the carolling of June, dear,
 When song-fill'd woods bewitch your ear again.

What shall I say ? The morning is so fair, Love :
 Come, walk with me, as in the days of old,
 There is a breath of Summer in the air, Love,
 And one sweet story waiting to be told :
 Sigh then no more, the flowers must not wither,
 Yea, you shall laugh, and look me in mine eyes,
 And not a cloud will cross the sun-lit arches,
 When, in a whisper, I have made you wise.
 Gold for our feet, and glory for our vision,
 Love for our hearts, and kisses for our way,
 Lowly I bend to heal your glad admission,
 'Time has no gift to equal mine To-day.'

THE GORSE UPON THE HILL.

UPON the hill, in Summer,
 The tangled gorse-bush blows ;
 With groups of yellow glory
 It darkens, and it glows,
 For dawning or for close.

I mind me of the shadows
 That lingered on the hill,
 A year ago, my lost one,
 When noon was wondrous still,
 Without a thought of ill.

Then all around us gathered
 A brown flock of the bees ;
 They settled on the yellow,
 And quivered in the breeze,—
 They were not such as these :

Their silken wings were brighter,
 The music that they made
 Was like the tune of waters,
 That slip 'twixt shine and shade,
 In some half-hidden glade.

And Oh, the miles that widened
 Far, far, beneath our feet,
 Seemed like a bit of Eden,
 Where trees might yet be sweet.
 Whose fruit men must not eat.

The thatched roofs slanted lowly
To Eastward and to West ;
The tasselled creepers tumbled
About the yeoman's nest,
Where Christ Himself might rest :

And here and there the tapers
Of holy fanes rose high,
Beside the rustling poplars
That lifted to the sky,—
But *then*, they did not sigh !

The silver threads of rivers,
From Nature's reel unwound,
Made patterns in the sunshine,
And lipped the scented ground,
Where scythe-touched grasses browned.

We saw it all, my darling,
A year ago to-day ;
The warmth of the world, love,
Had made our two hearts gay,
We kissed,—as lovers may !

You dreamed for very joy, love,
You slept amid the gold ;
I watched you smile in slumber
As I had watched of old,—
Before the tale was told.

The wind from yonder waters
Rose up to greet the gloam,
I woke you at the twilight,
And led you slowly home,
Beneath a star-set dome.

My Lost One ! Oh My Lost One,
The gorse is on the hill ;
The groups of yellow glory
Shift dark and brighter still,
But Oh, the noon is chill.

The bees come here to find you,
The moaning that they make,
Is like the mourn of forests
Where tempests soon will wake,
And shatter where they shake.

For in your last dear dream, love,
You sleep among the gold ;
I watch you in your slumber
As once I watched of old,—
Before the tale was told.

The wind from yonder waters
Blows winter on my brow ;
I stay to swear at star-time
The keeping of my vow :
But Oh, my Love, and Oh, Love,
I cannot wake you *now* !



THE MUSICIAN.

He owns a Palace in his soul,
 Where thought, the queen, entices tone
 To pause on thresholds, or to roll
 And spread itself upon her throne :
 The silences are ruled by Song,
 She claims his freedom, yet she makes
 The wills of valiant men more strong,
 When from her shrine the master shakes
 The finished rhythms he has stored
 In many a pure majestic chord.

Blind to all else, his ear has sight,
 Dumb to all else, his hands have speech ;
 His aspirations woo the height
 That seems to loom within his reach :
 Around the stars those strings are twined,
 Which stretch to Earth, o'er many a fret, —
 They vibrate to the master's mind,
 Their sweet harmonics sounding yet :
 So, though the echoes rise or fall,
 He hears a heart-throb through them all !

TO EDMUND HILL STANLEY, ESQ.

(*"I do not anticipate that you will find much difficulty in climbing Parnassus."*—Letter from E.H.S. to the Author.)

You fling for me a purple hope,
 Athwart a slope ;—
 A curve of rainbow o'er a hill
 Both high and chill :
 You lure me on to climb the steep,
 And dream a dream,—but not in sleep.

You kindle stars to charm mine eyes
 In widening skies ;
 My soul would travel where they shine,
 And make them mine :
 But, when I look to heed my feet,
 Behold the stones are hard to cheat.

My wings are young, and Oh, so frail,
 And they may fail
 When I have need of them, to fly
 So far and high ;
 So far and high, Oh glorious height,—
 Yet Hope and Heaven are infinite.

Dumb Destiny itself is slow ;
 For long ago
 The world sprung wrapped in strange attire,
 From awful fire :
 So slumbering embers, ages hidden,
 May one day flame, when God has bidden.

Who dares to gauge th' indwelling Power,
From hour to hour,
Which gives him breath to think, and act,
And thus enact,
The vast *I am*,—uncertain yet,
Perchance, for why such forces met ?

And I, because I cannot run,
Shall I then shun
The steep, whose summit I may tread,
When overhead,
Your purple Hope has beckoned on,
To where the fear of travel's gone ?

Nay ! Up, and to one purpose true
I will pursue ;
And laugh to scorn the misty maze
That wreathes the ways :—
If blood must stain some cruel stone,
It will, at least, be but mine own ! . . .

Of all the senses in the spheres,
Throughout the years :
Of tuneful lyres in marble halls
Where laughter falls ;
Of luscious fruit, of sparkling wine,
Shall be these mountain-songs of mine.

Yet, where reclines a stricken lute,
Alone, and mute ;
Where Sorrow 'gainst a window pane
Regards the rain :
My Muse must linger, and have breath
For those who look on doubt and death.

In leafy woods, by circled pools,
Where Zephyr cools
His lip, to kiss the fainting air
All flower-fair :
My fancy shall dictate a song
Upon the path that seemeth long.

High-foaming seas which roll to shore
With cannon-roar,
Which clasp a world with storm and dread,
By thunders led ;
Lo, these shall strike a stronger note,
And sound in regions more remote.

So will I on, and brave the height,
For one fair sight
Of all the world a poet sees,
From scenes like these :
Whilst still I hold the Truth sublime,—
' Not failure, but low aim is crime.'



THE WIND AND THE WILLOW.

A WIND passed over the world at noon,
Till it came to a shadow, which lay below.

A willow-tree, dreaming of elves who played
With its drooping green in the mid-day glow.
The willow woke with a sudden song,
For it waited the kiss of the wind for long.

The shadow answered to every breath,
Till the wind said—"Mock me no more, but go :
' The green of the willow is mine to-day,
' And we have secrets which none may know.
' I'll shield her from the ardent heat,
' No press of evil shall mark her feet."

The Willow trembled, and hushed her song ;
"I keep the shadow," she softly sighed,
' To shield my roots, lest a glow too warm
' Should seek my hurt, and be satisfied."
"Goodbye!" said the wind to the willow-tree,
"My storm of kisses is not for thee !"

CLEOPATRA TO ANTONY.

Scene—The room in the Monument into which Antony has been drawn by cords.

Time—The moment after he has expired.

Antony! Ah, can it be that your ear, like the
 ear of Osiris,
 Heeds not the sound of the prayer that is lipped
 from the heart of a Queen?
 Have you no beautiful song to sing to me,
 here, in the darkness,
 Sweet as the breath from the sails of my galley
 that met you long since
 On the gay waters of Cydnus? Antony, What,
 are you silent?
 I, who am wont to command, am waiting to
 own your behest;
 Here, with my hand on your brow, to dare you
 to breathing and living,
 Here, with my hand on your heart, to rouse you
 to passion and speech.

Ill doth the purple become the shoulders of
 one who is kneeling;
 See, how it folds on the floor, caressing the
 place of your feet.
 Will you not leap to your height,—the conquering
 height of a hero,
 And crown me your Queen with a kiss as tender
 in warmth as mine own?
 Look, here is wine for your lips, and bravely it
 foams o'er the vessel,

Pulsing with haste to be down the erst-eager
throat of my King :
Yea, and the fingers you ringed, are trembling, and
moist with emotion,
Shaking the slight silver stem of the goblet that
woos you to drink.

Antony, Antony, Antony ! Curses be on
me for ever,
Fearful as those of the soil, when the sleepy and
indolent tide
Of Nilus, the Saver of Egypt, forgets to arise
and brim into
The deep patient lap of the land, and float
o'er the feverish banks.
Curses be also on him who told you, 'The Queen,
the Young Isis,
'Goes on her way to the gods, and greeteth YOUR
footsteps no more !'
Surely my heart was amiss when I sent you a
message to slay you,--
Yet, would I succour my pride, as you, love,
would succour my fame.

For, as I mused of the scorn of your scarce expressed
sorrow, when Fulvia
Took to her Death for a mate, because unbe-
friended by you.
Mad was I only to prove if I had a
lover more loyal,
Burning was I to be sure of answers to
hungering thoughts :
Should I, at last, be to you but a trifle
of time that was done with ?

If I were robed for the tomb, would you revel
in laughter and wine? . . .
So, thro' my yearning for truth, complete and
supreme in its knowledge,
Now have I won in your blood a tribute more
mighty than tears !

Low on the bare polished floor that alone is my
home in all Egypt,
Facing the window wherein we drew you, dear
burden, with cords ;
Hunted and baffled I kneel, and whisper sweet
words to you, Master,
Words could you heed them, would stir your pulses
with sudden delight :
Woman I was, and I am, and Antony !
listen, I love you !
Blind will I be to all men, and deaf to the
sound of each voice,
Only arouse and grow warm, and spring to your
feet for a guerdon,
Then will we greet and begone to a beautiful
country afar.

Why was I born, to look thus on Death holding
rule o'er my Ruler ?
Chained is his tongue, and his eyes are as pools
in the blackness of night ;
Faint falls my soul as I watch with wonder too
tense for confession.
Oh, what a desert is here ! What terror of
travel alone !
Never shall hand take the hand that *you* fondled
Marc Antony, never !

Egypt shall mourn for me yet, and proud Alexandria weep :

Yea, she shall own the renown of one who was
royal in purpose,

Since I exult in the thought that shall spare me
from breathing—a slave !

Do I serve Cæsar ? Behold his conquest shall lack
in its splendour,

What, if I lied to him once ? The truth in my
heart is for you :

Seats that he hoped I should grace, shall mock him
for they shall be empty,—

I will defy him in sleep, and be in my
slumber a Queen,

Then let him glory in this,—that I cannot arise,
and white-handed

Hurl him a corpse from my side, in frenzies of
loathsome despair ;—

She who is strong in her love, more mighty could
be in her vengeance

Flinging the shafts of her hatred deep to the
heart of a foe !

Antony, Antony, Antony ! Speak me a word
in the darkness !

How can I fail to bewitch and win you to
answering speech ?

Here is my bosom laid bare, to serve for your
head as a pillow,

And it is white as the pearl I steeped in the
crimson of wine.

Wake from your fateful repose, Oh Master a-
wake, and remember.

H

Wake from your fateful repose, throw scorn on the
 banners of Rome ;
 Weary of waiting am I, and you, Are you
 weary of wooing ?
 Here is my life for your look, and here is my
 crown for your sigh !

Echo and silence o'er all : Oh horrible
 record of dumbness ; . . .
 I will be brave in my grief, and nestle the
 thought of my end,
 Lest, in the City of Hills, where Pompey's high
 pillar stands proudly,
 I, as a captive should pause, where long since YOU
 honoured the dead.
 What ! Shall I linger to crawl, like a worm that is
 trampled and wounded,
 Shall I be lost in reproach, whilst the train of the
 Victor rolls on ?
 Nay ! By my kingdom I swear, by the gods of
 the height and the river,
Never shall Italy laugh, because I am
robbed of my smiles !

* * * * *

Egypt, I leave you at last, for love that can
 never have leaving ;
 Fair be your fame in the years that will grant
 me remembrance alone :
 Caesar, I fling you my curse, to ride in my
 place in your Triumph,
 Close by your heart, in the car that must carry
 regret with the gold.

Antony! Dearest of Kings, my lips touch your own
 as I whisper
 Blessings to you, and for you; the last that shall fall
 from my mouth :
 So, whilst I move from your side, to nourish
 the sweet that is soothing,
 Dream that I kiss you, and Lo ! As you stir in
 your dream,—we shall meet !



IN MEMORIAM.

Sir John Millais.

FOR him God painted a pure early day,
 A misty dawn of promise, then he linned
 Upon the spreading canvas, all undimmed,
 A bolder outline, touched anon with gray.

The student saw where brush and palette lay,
 He seized Hope's peerless colourings, and rimmed
 A sun in his horizon, so there brimmed
 Meridian light on all the future way.

'Tis now a Summer sleep which wraps the scene
 Whereon God's gloam has fallen : all is well :
 No withered verdure mingles with the green,
 No sunset was there, though the twilight fell :
 For since by truth Art makes her pictures plain,
 In pictured truths the Artist lives again.

A STARLESS NIGHT

WHERE art Thou, God ?

Look ! In this heart that Thou hast made to sound
To all the keynotes that Thou strikest in
The Holiest of Holies : even here
Is an unfinished chord, and thro' my life
The note of discord jars upon my thought,
And fills me with a strange wild wonderment.

It is a Starless Night : great darkness dwells
Even in darkness ; here, against a tree
Which dread uncertainty has led me to,
I lean and ponder, for the way is rough,
And little know I of the path which leads
Me on unto my goal.

The wood is merged
In misty silence, and in damp repose :
Scarcely can I behold my lifted hand,
And I am lost—

Lost ! Lost !

If morn would break,
If I could see the line of hope across
The waiting heavens ; if I could rejoice
When from his watery nest, the bird leaps up
As tho' to perch upon the Eastern gate
Oped by those pink-tipped fingers which belong
To veiled Aurora : then, perchance my soul
Were strong to bid my weary feet go on,
And win the ending of the way : but now—

God ! Art Thou there ?—But now, Oh it is dark,
 And earth is empty, and my heart is full
 Of memory, not of hope. The face that smiled
 Into my mother's when I was a child,
 It is no longer fair : my lips are stained
 With kisses that were ripe, too ripe for me,
 And the sweet sense of them has damned my life
 And made me what I am. . . .

If *he* were here,
 If he could take this small cold hand in his,
 And sooth my hungry ears with dearer words
 Than I am worthy of : if I could lean,
 Like John, upon the breast of my Beloved,
 Heaven had dawned already, and a peace,—
 The great calm that there was so long ago
 Upon the Eastern sea, Oh, it were matched
 By mine own feeling of serenity.

Why am I left alone in all the world
 With Fear for my close bosom friend, and why
 Is there no beacon-light to guide me on ?
 God has forgotten me, and I belong
 To none, nor to myself ; but yet the love
 Which one time made my life too beautiful,
 Oh is *it* lost ?

Nay, nay, my blood grows warm
 At thought of it, and my poor weary eyes
 Are wet with tears.

Be still, Oh beating heart,
 That must so soon be still for evermore ;
 And flutter not with this strong wind of woe
 That blows from every quarter of the globe.

No moon, no stars, no casement light for me,
 No watcher waiting in a cosy home
 To welcome, on the threshold, my soft step.
 Unknown I am, and hungry, and so cold,
 If hatred had been in me, and revenge,
 My feet had travelled on a flowery plain,
 And hands would serve me, and true tongues would speak,
 Eternal comfort to me : but I loved,
 And for my loving I am doubly cursed
 Of God and Man : . . .

Yet, Hatred—is a Sin !

It is a Starless Night : which is the way
 Unto forgetfulness ?

I have you now,
 Oh River ! If you only were a child,
 Whom I could kiss for what you have to give
 You should be whelmed with kisses !

Take me in :
 And when you see young lovers on your banks
 Then bear my dead face to their feet, and say
 In language more significant than words,—
Beware of Love !

Dare I kneel once to pray,
 Ere I am clasped in your dear dark caress ?

GOD BLESS HIM WHOSE I WAS.





DOMINE DIRIGE NOS.*

GREAT BRITAIN proudly lifts from seas,
 Where fleets ride boldly at their ease ;
 The Empire's crown is pearled with fame,
 And honour guards the throne from shame :
 Fair freedom basks beneath the sun,
 Adorned with gems our conquests won ;
 And loyal Britons strike again
 The notes their sires ne'er sang in vain,—

DOMINE DIRIGE NOS.

The battle thunder of a foe
 May shake the England that we know ;
 But memory makes us strong for years,
 That edge the circle of the spheres :
 The prayer of ages has been owned,
 When Britons looked where stars are throned ;
 More glorious yet our fame shall dwell,
 As ever on the song must swell,—

DOMINE DIRIGE NOS.

Then up, Oh, City, fair to see,
 And up, ye Freemen of the free :
 Let loose the silver tongues of joy,
 And all your tuneful notes employ :
 The splendour of Victoria's age
 Shall crown the long historic page ;
 And, as we sing Her praise to-day,
 In vast accord we humbly pray,—

DOMINE DIRIGE NOS.

* City Motto Song, set to music by Mr. W. H. Cummings, and dedicated by him to Sir G. Faudel-Phillips.

A GASCON LEGEND.

(Founded on *Jasmin's* poem entitled '*L'Abuglo de Castel-Cuillé*.')

Argument.

Baptiste, a Gascon Peasant, is about to be married to Angela, a gay Village Girl, against his better principles, which dictate that he should still wed Margaret, the maiden to whom he was betrothed ; her sudden blindness, however, and the consequent opposition of Baptiste's friends to the match, prevail in Angela's favour.

Margaret supposes her Lover to have gone for a holiday, and is anticipating his return, when her brother Paul startles her with the intelligence of the morrow's wedding. Driven to despair, Margaret determines to attend the ceremony ; and, before the Bridal Service has proceeded far, she denounces Baptiste, and stabbing herself dies in the church. Stricken with terrible remorse, Baptiste draws the dagger from her bosom, and, plunging it in his own, falls dead across her body.

Characters.

ANGELA, betrothed to Baptiste.

MARGARET, formerly betrothed to Baptiste, but rejected
on account of her sudden blindness.

BAPTISTE.

PAUL, brother to Margaret.

A WITCH.

Chorus.

SCENE I.

A Village Green. Peasants bearing triumphal poles and banners.
Angela and Baptiste discovered in the centre.

Chorus of Maidens and Swains.

Happy Day !
Bloom is on the bridal way,
Gift of almond scent and whiteness
That shall charm our eyes to brightness,
And shall woo the fair miles spreading
To be sweeter for the wedding
Of the morrow ;
Hear us borrow
For to-day a Bridal Song,
Whilst we trip in tune along.
Happy day, happy day,
Bloom is on the Bridal way.

[A Rustic Dance. The Peasants disappear. Baptiste left alone.

Baptiste.

'Mid all this gorgeous glamour of an hour,
My aching heart beats mournfully alone ;
And Joy unripened, like a blighted flower,
Drops from the proudness of a lifted throne.

[Orchestra alone. Baptiste listens sorrowfully, and sings,
whilst caressing a lock of Margaret's hair.

Song.

In by-gones sweet she sang for me
The measures of her heart ;
When every leaf on every tree
Took up a rustling part ;

I sat and watched her spin at morn
 White robes of dazzling grace ;
 I loved the glory of the dawn
 That beamed upon her face.
 Oh, Margaret, I love you yet,
 In Death alone can I forget !

The magic in her sun-lit eyes
 Died out like embers spent ;
 No more the radiance of the skies
 Their sparkling graces lent :
 In darkness then she took my hand,
 To guide her down the ways ;
 She saw no beauty in the land,
 No splendour in the days.
 Oh, Margaret, I love you yet,
 In Death alone can I forget.

They lured me from her virgin side,
 They vowed we should not wed ;
 They found for me a fitter bride
 To be mine own instead :

[*Enter ANGELA on tiptoe, unseen by Baptiste.*]

But still the maiden of my heart
 Expectant waits for me ;
 She does not dream that we must part,
 Whatever else may be.
 Oh, Margaret, I love you yet,
 In Death alone can I forget.

[*Exit.*

Angela.

He was singing of the blind one
 Whom he loved awhile ago ;
 I must charm him from a mem'ry
 That can make his pulses glow ;

He shall own me as his idol,
 He must worship at my feet ;
 He shall know the perfect rapture
 Of a happiness complete.

[Chorus heard returning with Baptiste.

Chorus.

Happy day, happy day,
 Bloom is on the bridal way ;
 Trip it, trip it, all along,
 Flood the daisied meads with song.
 See, the bride's blue eyes are smiling,
 Love himself her heart beguiling
 With the sweetest song of all ;
 And her white feet scarcely fall
 On the greenness of the pastures,
 They are so exceeding small.
 Happy day,
 Bloom is on the bridal way ;
 Happy day,
 Let's be merry while we may.

[*Enter a Witch.*]

Angela (recit.)

See where she comes, the prophetess of truth,
 Who augurs fate for maiden and for man,
 Here let her tell what gifts of time shall be,
 To crown the blessing that with love began.

The Witch (aside).

Now will I show to Angela her fate,
 Ere Bridal morn shall make my word too late.

[The Peasants group themselves in the background. Angela
 and Baptiste standing somewhat apart from the Witch,

The Witch.

By the Whiteness of Winter,
The Horror of Hell,
By the Woe of the Laughter
Where miseries dwell ;
By the coldness of seas
That wash over pale faces,
Where the dead find their ease
In deceitful embraces :
By Fire and by Water,
Beware, Oh, my daughter !

For false is thy groom
As a promise unkept ;
And the Fates have spun webs
Round his heart as he slept :
And the bride of the morrow
May bend by a bier
In the tumult of sorrow,
Which Death can uprear.
By Fire, and by Water,
Beware, Oh my daughter !

Angela.

On, Avaunt ! I will not hear her.

Baptiste.

Bid me go !

Angela.

Shall she joy because we fear her ?
Never so !

Let the beldame fling her curses,
Let her firebrands burn her breast ;
We will smile for coming mercies,
And withstand to-morrow's test ;
For the evil she hath spoken
Shall drop down like arrows broken.

Baptiste.

But this terror will not leave me ;
Dark forebodings fill my soul !

Angela.

Let no Witch's omens grieve thee,
Yield but to my sweet control :
In thine eye shall be the laughter,
In thy throat shall be a song ;
You shall dare her vengeance after,
When your courage shall be strong.

Angela and Baptiste.

Be no longer silent maidens,
Tune the harp with mad refrain ;
Song will banish this delusion,
Hurl the chorus back again !

Chorus.

The clouds have vanished from the hill,
The world is bathed in glory still :
Full Joy resumes her royal throne,
And rules our laughter with her own.
The tear is lost in sun-lit seas,
Where hope rides gaily at her ease ;
So crown with mirth this Happy Day,
For bloom is on the bridal way.

SCENE II.

The interior of Margaret's Cottage. Margaret discovered seated at her spinning wheel, singing.

Margaret (recit.)

The Light of Heaven is lost to me ; the sun
Is plunged in floods of darkness at the noon ;
But glorious day already is begun,
If Baptiste come to take my kisses soon.

Song.

I am weaving a dream of days to be.

Baptiste !

The web is fine, and the web is free,

Baptiste !

The pattern is rare with its budding flowers,

Traced over the warp of the hidden hours,

And the dream is mine, and the dream is ours,

Baptiste !

The wheel goes round, and the years go by,

Baptiste !

Ah, none so happy as you and I,

Baptiste !

The weft has widen'd, the flowers have spread,

The blush on my cheek is rosy red ;

Come, kiss me twice for the day we wed,

Baptiste !

I am weaving a dream of days to be,

Baptiste !

I am waiting here by the wheel for thee,

Baptiste !

Oh well for the web with the budding flowers,

They will open soon with the hidden hours,

And the dream is mine, and the dream is ours,

Baptiste !

[Enter PAUL.]

Margaret.

Is it my Love indeed ?

Paul.

Nay, sister mine :

What maiden fancies haunt that heart of thine ?

I have fresh tidings—Angela's a bride.

Margaret.

I knew it not ! The world is growing wide.

Paul.

The bridal throng, with dance and song,

Through Gascon byways wind :

The day is fair, and all are there,

But we are left behind.

I would that we in revelry

Might mingle with the rest ;

I'd lead thee down the merry town,

And gaily don my best.

Margaret.

Oh speak ! Who may the bridegroom be ?

You have not told his name to me.

Paul.

It is Baptiste, thy friend !

Margaret (agitated).

It is Baptiste ! my friend ?

* * * *

Hidden Chorus.

Happy day,

Bloom is on the Bridal way.

Happy day,

Let's be merry while we may.

[Bells heard in the distance,

Paul.

Hark ! The joyous bells are ringing ;
Sister, dost thou hear the singing ?

Margaret.

Hark ! The joyous bells are ringing :—
And, Oh God, I hear them singing.
Leave me here awhile, I pray,
You shall wear your doublet gay ;
We will make our holiday
On the morning of to-morrow.

Paul.

On the morning of to-morrow !

[*Exit* PAUL.]

Margaret.

So he is false ! Oh God, how can I live,
Who love too deeply ever to forgive ?
In starless dark my soul confirms my sight,
Buried is hope, and all the world is night.

[*Enter* The Witch.]

Witch.

The pathways burn my feet,
They are so warm and ripe with roses ;
But say, what ails thee, Sweet ?
Thy hand on mine so coldly closes,
And hast thou not one little word
To speak to me, my lonely bird ?

[Margaret resuming her spinning.]

Margaret.

Ah Ha ! I have been singing,
 And I have lost my breath ;
 I heard the bright bells ringing,
 And this my glad heart saith :—
 ‘ Oh soon will be my Bridal,
 And soon shall I be gay ;
 Baptiste is coming, coming,
 To bear me far away.’
 Ah Ha ! I have been singing,
 And I have lost my breath !

Witch.

But Baptiste comes not hither ;
 Your love may be in vain.

Margaret.

Nay : When the almonds wither,
 He'll come to me again.
 Oh soon will be my Bridal,
 And soon shall I be gay :
 Baptiste is coming, coming,
 To bear me far away ;—
 Ah Ha ! I have been singing,
 And I have lost my breath.

Witch.

Retain, Sweet Maid,
 Thy joy of heart ;
 Time shall not keep
 Ye long apart.

(*aside*) Ah, she dissembles well ; but yet I know
 Her spurious laughter hides o'erwhelming woe.

[*Exit.*

Hidden Chorus of Maidens.

Now the day is nearly over,
 Sing we each to each goodnight ;
 Dream the dusk away in sweetness,
 Love is coming like the light :
 Love is coming, Love is coming,
 Dream the dusk away,
 Goodnight !

[Margaret rises, and produces a dagger.

Margaret.

Where shall I point it ? Here—or here—or here ?
 A heart made mad, of madness hath no fear :
 To-morrow morn my blood shall fall as rain ;
 Sweet is the wound which heals a deeper pain.

[Resuming her seat, and spinning as before.

I weave no dreams of the days to be,
 Baptiste !
 I wait no more by the wheel for thee,
 Baptiste !
 The web is broken : the threads are torn,
 The roses are scattered away in scorn,
 But deep in my heart I hold a thorn,
 Baptiste !

SCENE III.

Interior of a small Church. Margaret and Paul discovered
 near the Altar.

Chorus.

On this Holy Morn,
 Come we to the bridal shrine ;
 Love itself is all Divine,
 Beauty else excelling.

Love ! In us be born,
 Thou, Who art of holy birth,
 Lift us from the dust of Earth,
 Have in us Thy dwelling.

So may we adorn
 Happy homes with gentle grace,
 Till in the eternal place
 Bridal Songs are swelling.

[The bell.

[Quartette of Maidens scattering flowers and singing.

Hark, the bell,
 They are coming !
 Hear it swell,
 They are coming !
 Strew the flowers in the way
 White and sweet,
 For her feet,
 They are coming !

[Enter ANGELA and BAPTISTE, and the Witch behind.]

Chorus.

On this Holy Morn,
 Come we to the bridal shrine ;
 Love itself is all Divine,
 Beauty else excelling.

[As Angela and Baptiste reach the Altar, Margaret
 moves excitedly towards them.

Margaret.

Baptiste !
 Thus have we met ;
 Thus would you teach me to forget,
 But Oh ! It cannot be !
 False Lover, false, and falser yet ;
 Baptiste, before the sun be set,
 You *shall* remember me !

[Stabs herself.

Paul (rushing out).

Revenge ! Revenge !

Chorus.

Curses are on us,
Oh pitiless maid ;
Curses are on us,
And we are afraid :
Mary, dear Mother,
Look down from the skies,
Mary, dear Mother :

* * * *

Ah, surely she dies !

Baptiste.

Margaret !

Margaret.

It is I,
Kiss me, Baptiste, before I die.

[Baptiste stoops to caress her.

Angela (rushing upon him).

You shall not, you are mine.

Baptiste.

Take off those cursed hands of thine.

A Priest.

Quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat !

Baptiste (tearing the dagger from Margaret's bosom).

Let the bright crimson flow,
Thine is my latest breath ;
And all the debt I owe
Is satisfied in Death.

[Stabs himself, and falls across Margaret's body.

Chorus.

Miserere Domine.

STRENGTH'S ILLUSIVENESS.

‘ I, strong with an iron strength,
 And cold as the touch of steel,
 Will scorn the love of the world, and laugh
 At men who drink and reel ;
 Who grind beside a wheel,
 And fall at last to a giddy rest,—
 For no temptation shall storm *my* breast.’

‘ I, blind to a woman’s feet,
 And deaf to their dancing sound,
 Will set mine own, with a martial tread,
 Upon a firmer ground,
 Where rocks and stones abound :—
 For so will I cheat the De’il of gain,
 And keep my soul in a self-wrought chain.’

‘ Bloom-wreaths for the bee shall live,
 And thorns for the hurt of wings ;
 But God, Who mated them each to each,
 Must know a mortal sings
 As safe from the curse of things ;—
 And then mine eyes shall not look afar,
 Lest they be lured by a silver star.’

‘ Soul-force shall subject the dust,
 The will of my mind the clay,
 And these alone may command my faith
 To the vows I swear this day :
 No need have I to pray,
 For where the sin that I cannot shun ?
 I yield my sinewy strength to none.’

‘Yea, sweets of the world shall fly,
 Lest Darkness should damn my years ;
 For unto self and from out of myself
 I aim a thousand spears
 Until the Battle clears,
 And I, by the strength of my will alone,
 Have made the Kingdom of God mine own.’

* * * *

So spake, with a flush of pride,
 A son of the Eden sire ;
 His eyes grew bright with the glow of zeal,
 Which set his soul on fire,
 For its funereal pyre ;
 And thought, presumptuous, built a wall,
 To hide the face of the Foe of all.

But late, when the strong one slept,
 The Enemy crossed the span
 Which scarce divided the clay from flame,
 And laughed ‘Since Time began,
 Thus gat I rule o’er man’:
 Then gave He the sleeper a dream of sin,
 And into his soul the fangs went in. . . .

At dawn, at the break of day,
 Ere ever the dews had dried,
 The tempted fell, and the angels wept
 For Satan satisfied ;
 But God Almighty cried,—
 ‘*What soul its weakness doth most confess,
 Shall strongest be in the day of stress.*’

I ONLY DREAMED.

I ONLY dreamed your welcome hand
 Was lightly laid upon my brow ;
 That years and years had stepped aside,
 And that the *Then* was changed to *Now* :
 Unaltered are some scenes I know ;
 The little dell beside the hill
 Is sleeping, and the blue-bells blow
 Upon the open moorland still :
 But you are gone,—I only dreamed
 Your eyes in benediction beamed !

I only dreamed ; 'tis sad to wake
 And find a lonely world in store ;
 To hear the beating of the waves
 Upon a memory's shadowed shore :
 The ghosts of recollection flit
 About the chambers of my heart :
 Once, by yourself, they were love-lit,
 Before we were so far apart :
 To-day the skies more brightly gleam,
 To-day,—but hush !—I only dream !

If you would come to me, Beloved,
 If you would come, where'er you are,
 Our lives, like stars, would beam across
 Time's waves, and show the Harbour Bar :
 Are they *your* steps that nearer roam ?
 Is it *your* face so near to mine ?
 Oh, dearest, God has led you home,
 And all the clouds with silver shine :
 Our happiness is truth, I deem :
 Glad heart, be still,—I do not dream,

WATCHING.

ALL the years in an hour of Night,
 Here, by your face, so drawn and white,
 Here, in a chamber, large and lone,
 Where I fight with Death for my very own,
 And the shadows raise me an empty throne,
 Upon the wall, Belovéd,

The ash in the grate is stark and pale ;
 The late dim glints of the embers fail
 'Neath the full fair face of the patient moon,
 That seems to think I may need her soon,
 That bids me dream of a bygone noon,—
 Ah, bygone, My Belovéd.

I hold your fingers all close in mine,
 I wet your lips with the red of wine,
 And touch you gently, as doth the Spring
 When she woos to flight a folded wing,
 And bids the throat of the minstrel sing,
 At morning, My Belovéd.

But the drops, untasted, steal slowly down,
 Despised and sorrowful, changing brown,
 And I smoothe the sheet, and I cross the floor,—
 Can Death go out through an open door,
 And will you speak to me once, once more,—
 Ah, once, once more, Belovéd ?

You have no word for my close-strained ears,
 You have no sight of the swelling tears ;
 But I hear your breath come soft and slow,
 As the fall of leaf in a sunset glow,
 Through the deep and dusk of the woods below,
 In summer, My Belovéd !

Oh many a time we have watched the stars
 Swim out from the mist of hidden bars ;
 And the shadows float o'er a green-rimmed pond,
 Till the radiant lights in the realm beyond
 Bade sea, and river, and pool respond
 To glory, My Belovéd.

But then was never a need of speech,
 Our hearts spake silently each to each,
 Whilst we saw the pictures come and go,—
 The tender wheat to an auburn grow,
 A sunrise mellow a maze of snow,
 And flood the hills, Belovéd. . . .

The night is nearing a trembling dawn ;
 God, give me a star for the break of morn ;
 Yea, wrap me a star in that darkest cloud,
 If I yet must weep by a stainless shroud,
 And bury him deep with the voiceless crowd,—
 My Prince, and My Belovéd !

If I greet you straight on the lips, love, so,
 Will you rouse, and look in mine eyes, and know
 'Tis the sister kiss of the one we shared
 On our Bridal-Morn, when the world seemed bared
 Of gloom and sorrow, and joy unspared
 Was granted us, Belovéd ?

No answer yet : but you *shall* not die
 Till you kiss me once for the days gone by.
 Till you kiss me once for the days to be, —
 The dark, dark days by a sobbing sea,
 When I shall linger and look for thee,
 And only thee, Belovéd. . . .

“ Goodnight, goodmorrow, but not goodbye ” :

He has kissed and gone in a parting sigh,
And the morning looms in a mist of rain ;
There will only be sunshine once again,—
When the other sailor dares the Main
To come to thee, Belovéd !



TO AN APPLE-TREE IN BLOOM.

I COME to thee at morning, when the East
Drops weightless robes upon expectant miles,
And from the distant windows, light-increas'd,
Aurora smiles :
Refreshed with dew, and fragrant from repose,
Thy petals, tinted with the softest rose,
As if from sleep, a little more unclosed,
And, scarce awake, yield noiseless to the air
A benediction for a morn so fair.

Full-bosomed with thy blossom at the noon,
I find thee, bride-like, in a veiled array :
The green apparel that thou donnest soon
Is tucked away ;
And drifting gently to the touch of Spring,
Thy branches, bird-like, move half hovering,
Unwilling yet to be upon the wing,
Unready yet to leave the cosy nest,
And fling white pinions to a doubtful West.

From far Hymettus hie the downy bees,
To strain these goblets of the crystal wine ;
Their joy is murmured on the vagrant breeze
To all the Nine :
For luscious vintages are here, more sweet
Than those that tassel in a Southern heat,
And follow fast the ripening of wheat ;
Nor could the jewelled pitchers of a king
Pour forth to Bacchus purer offering.

Lo, as I look upon thy sheeted bloom,
And heed the music of these busy wings,
Pomona wanders in the garden room,
And softly sings :
She croons as 'twere a melody of hope,
Full sure that in the wine-days on the slope
Flushed balls will dangle from a leafy rope,
And for her hand a wreath of fruit bend low,
Where now is poised a heritage of snow. . . .

'Twas Morn and Noon ; behold, once more 'tis Night :
Astarte climbs the steep that rounds the sphere,
And in the place of full Hyperion's light
Her horns appear :
Like some mute nun, thou standest 'neath the dome,
As if thou had'st grave thoughts in this still gloam,
With dreams, perchance, of loiterers gone home :
And so, bare-breasted to the stars and God,
I leave thee, monarch, where a mortal trod.



TO A PESSIMIST.

WHAT'S wrong with the world of to-day ?
 A truce to your murmuring, pray !
 Come out from the shadier side of the street,
 And don't be for ever regarding your feet ;
 But look to the sunshine to open your heart,
 And give all your troubles a glorious start
 To the Land of No-Finding
 And Never-Reminding,
 Make haste to Love's bank, where new hope you may borrow
 For what will you know of the world of to-morrow ?

What's wrong with the world of to-day ?
 A truce to your murmuring, pray ;
 Be glad if you've really a ladder to climb,
 For surely you'll mount it a rung at a time :
 Don't sit down and sigh,
 Because you can't fly
 In a new-fashioned lift to the top in a trice ;
 But make for the summit, and that will suffice !

 Do good whilst you may
 In this world of to-day ;
 For you'll never know anything better than sorrow
 If you wait for the world to be better to-morrow !



STORM.

Tumult that cannot be told, and foam on the
 wide-arching billows,
 Riding full-front to the night, and gathering
 strength as they come :
 Roaring and wrestle of waves that shriek thro' the
 mist, to the goddess
 Looking askant on the world, ere hiding in
 garments of gloom.
 Fierce run the seas, neck to neck, wind-driven, but
 reined in their courses,
 Only so far may they go, not touching the
 feet of the babes
 Cradled, and cosy, and warm, enshrined in yon
 broad-angled cottage,
 Set on the crest of a crag, made grey by the
 finger of Time.

Darkness, revealed as it were, by tributes of
 transient silver
 Dropped from the roundness that shines, anon in the
 star-bereft dome ;
 Far in the forest a wail from leaves that are
 troubled at midnight,
 Fearful because of the nests, swung high in the
 thick of the trees :
 What if a bird heart be sore, and young throats be
 missed in the morning,—
 If there be room in a nest that erstwhile was
 crowded with wings ?
 What if the eye of a thrush shall look with a
 start on the byway,
 Where a soft pinion is spread, but never for
 soaring again.

Seaward and skyward thick gloom, that grows with
the sound of the tempest
Darkly more dread, as the frown investing the
face of a fiend :
Din on the shore, like to drums, announcing far
surges as monarchs
Suddenly called on to be in place of their
sires, who were kings :
Proud, tho' lamenting they come, till hissing, they
turn themselves backwards,
Victims of furious Fate which sceptred them
but for despair.
Yea, they are robbed of their crowns, and forced to
retreat in submission ;
Now, as they spring on the rocks they fondly had
dreamed of as thrones !

Bursting in frenzy at last, the thunders leap
after the lightnings,
Battle-noise sweeps from the hills, and shivers the
sea and the shore ;
Slanting and sharp falls the flame, in shafts that are
white from the furnace,
Snake-like and twisted they run, till beasts in their
lair are afraid :
Then, in a hush that obeys the silent com-
mand of The Master,
Forth from the fountains on high, descend the
torrential rains ;
Filled are the breaks in the land, and brimmed with the
wealth of the waters,
Spent is the rage of the spheres, in the meeting and
thronging of streams.

Oh for the welcome of noon, the breath of young
buds in the hedges
Marking the miles of white roads, sweet-warmed by the
look of the sun ;
Oh for the sail that was set at morning, — unknown,
to the Westward,
Heading the craft to the deep where shoals were
sheen-dappled and blue.
Hope was there then on the brow of one, who the
night through had waited
Promise of plenty at dawn ;—his heart at the
rudder before ;
Now, nevermore will the Spring make glad the
keen eye of the fisher,
Now, nevermore will the sail be reared to the
rope in his hand !

Look ! In the Orient light, new shed on the
pacified ocean,
Spoil of the tempest he floats, deep-drunk with the
wine of the seas ;
Nearer and nearer upborne to the cot, where the
children have slumbered,
Dreaming the while of the kiss he gave, with his
blessing, at morn.
Ah ! . . . they have said him ‘Adieu,’ no more will their
round cheeks grow brighter,
Flushing because of his tread on doorsteps the
Wife has made sweet ;
Never again will their eyes be pressed to the
lattice at gloaming,
Waiting to catch the first sight of his boat, curving
home on the bay.

After the thunder and rain, and cruel commotion
of billows,
Down in the East are the rifts and rents in the
wing of the night :
Sound dies away with the dark, the cup of the
Storm-god is empty.
Lulled are the forests to hear the earliest
song of a lark.
Fresh from the heart of the hill the brook runs a-
way to the river ;
Proud of the strength it has gained, the river runs
on to the sea.
Burden of boats from afar, is laid in the breast
of the haven,
Studded with cliffs that keep guard o'er waters
that babble below.

Will there be sunrise to-day, or stars any more
at the twilight ?
God ! Give a Sun and a Star to souls who are
Summer-bereaved !
White are the cheeks of the babes, and broken the
heart of the mother,
Yea, tho' the rose-girdled world seems fairer for
passionate rains.
Many will smile at the light, and scarcely re-
member the darkness ;
But to these else, what despair will throne in the
glory of noon !—
For, by the margin of rocks that link the lone
cot to the ocean,
Breathless the son of the surf floats stark in a
visionless sleep.

Rocked in the cradle of seas, and hushed by the
 fury of billows ;
 Lulled by the kiss of the foam which leaped o'er his
 lips with a laugh :—
 Who shall be lord over *him*, the slave of the
 Master of masters ?
 Who shall beguile him of words to speak with a
 sigh for the last ? . . .
 Sailor, goodbye to the storm, but storm, be ashamed
 of your conquest,
 Sob far away, and afar, whilst you murmur 'farewell'
 in the East :
 Yea, make you dew as for tears, and shadow at
 noon, for your mourning,
 Whilst, in the close-curtained cot, the watchers live
 only to weep.

* * * *

Will there be sunrise to-day, or stars any more
 at the twilight ?
 God, give a Sun and a Star to *all* who are
 Summer-bereaved !



A WINE SONG.

DRINK !

To Life, to Love, and to Laughter, each ;
 With crimson breath is the goblet lipped,
 With sunset from over the hills,
 Where the purple trails of the vineyards reach,
 And the drenching dew of the morn is sipped,
 On the brink of the vagrant rills !

Flushed sweet by the kiss of a Southern sun,
 By the dusky maids of the vintage won,
 Thro' heat and shower, thro' cool and flame ;
 The sparkling blood of the clusters came.
 Drink high, drink low,
 To the liquid glow
 That climbs the flagon, and drops below !

Drink !

To Life, to Love, and to Laughter, all :
 With the red of dawn is the crystal decked,
 With the foam of seas is the crystal flecked ;
 And the noon of day is held in thrall
 O'er a slender stem, in a curving deep
 Where the luscious dreams of a Summer, sleep.
 So high with the goblet ! Greet and drain,
 Then fill to the tinkling brim again !

A CHRISTMAS EVE.

TO MY FRIEND, LADY MARY MACKENZIE.

LONG regret for all that was,—
 Hum of bees among the lilies,
 Stars at gloaming, moon-lit waters,
 And the songs of Summer's daughters ;
 They are gone for aye and ever,
 And my heart is breaking, breaking,
 For the lonesome of the Present,
 And the misty days to come.

Far away the bells are pealing,
 By their melody revealing
 What the time is, and the season,
 But they bring no joy to me ;
 For the maiden whom I trusted
 With the Summer has departed,
 And I linger, broken-hearted,
 In a grey and sunless shadow,
 Whilst I grudge the world its gladness,
 Whilst I envy it its music,
 In the hour of saddened silence,
 Which is mine for evermore.

White the earth is, and enchanted,
 There are crystals on the pathways,
 With a sound of happy voices,
 Ringing on the frosty air :
 Men rejoice, for they remember
 'Tis the dawning of the Yuletide ;

And the mothers in the homesteads,
Soothe to sleep the little children
By their stories of the angels,
And the goodwill gift they granted
In the ages long ago.

What care I for sound of singing,
Or the mad and merry ringing
Of the chimes, that greet the hilltops,
And float farther to the valleys :
Shall they woo me to forgive her,
Who has left me for her fancy,
Who has robbed me of contentment
And the source from which it sprung ?
Nay ! They must not : she is worthy
Only of a swift-sent vengeance,
That shall take her unawares.

Oh, unruly heart, be silent ;
Still, perhaps, she may remember
How in June she twined the roses
Into garlands fresh and fair :
How she laughed, until the noontide
Was more golden for her presence,
And the gloaming was a promise
Of her love for all to-morrows.
'Tis a dream too sweet for dreaming ;
Doubtless, in the happy distance,
She is charmed with Yuletide splendours,
And she laughs, and she forgets !

Yet I listen to the pealing
Of those Christmas bells that haunt me,
And I ask again the question,
' Shall they woo me to forgive ? '

And I know the noblest duty
 Were to give eternal pardon,
 And to bury thoughts of vengeance
 With the mem'ries of the Past.

* * * *

There's a soft light in the shadow,
 Like a sudden moonbeam falling
 O'er a dark place, in the silence
 Of the weird and solemn night :
 Am I mad, or am I dreaming,
 That I hear an angel whisper,
 'They who pardon earn a blessing
 Larger than they have bestowed' ?
 Nay, I stand beside my lattice,
 And my Love comes near unto me,
 With her white hands meekly folded,
 And I tremble, for she speaks :
 And she says, 'For, my forgiveness,
 Let the Yuletide bring me to thee,
 For I love you as I loved you
 In the doubtless days of yore.'

Can I keep her for the answer ?
 'Love, my Love, the Past is buried ;
 Let me greet you 'mid the chiming
 Of the holy happy bells.
 Crown the Yuletide for our monarch ;
 There shall be no more regretting,
 But the joining in the chorus,
 "Peace on Earth, Goodwill to Men."'



FAIR WEATHER.

THERE is fair weather to-day, dear,
 The sunlight is low on the lea ;
 A magic is in the meadows,
 And silver is on the sea :

There's promise in every pasture,
 A pledge in each dappled plain,
 And poppies are burning crimson
 'Mid patches of golden grain.

Oh sing for the fair weather, darling,
 Whilst Mother is here at your side ;
 The shadows may one day overwhelm you,
 For woe and the world are wide :
 So sing whilst you hold the vision
 That Mother herself loves best :—
 The sight of a glowing noonday,
 The look of a world at rest.

There is fair weather to-night, dear,
 The forests are heavy with wings ;
 The gardens have closing blossoms,
 Where softly a minstrel sings :

There's dew on the purpling vineyards,
 There's peace in the drowsy plain ;
 And stars in the vaulted heaven
 Are sailing the sky again.

So sing for the fair weather, darling,
 Ere darkness will win you to sleep ;
 There's many a heart at gloaning
 Will turn to the night to weep :
 But you must sing for the vision
 That Mother herself loves best :—
 The sight of the silver moon, dear,
 The look of a world at rest.

THE ROSE AND THE BIRD.

When early roses bend and blow,
 And wreaths of blossom come and go
 About the garden ways ;
 The dew hangs thick beneath the thorn,
 Whilst in the drowsy woods is heard
 Rustle of wings, where leaves are stirred
 To meet the magic of the morn.

The eager minstrel seeks the sky,
 His heart of hope is beating high,
 And bursts of melody proclaim,
 In liquid lengths of untaught lays,
 The perfect passion of his praise :
 Then all the kindred glory strays
 Beyond the Eden, whence it came,
 To where the roses flush and flame
 About the garden ways.

'Twas thus upon a day of June,
 When one fair flower of the thorn,
 In some strange mood of selfish scorn
 Despised the echo of the tune :
 Her heart was jealous of the strain,
 Because she could not sing refrain :
 She never guessed her scent could raise
 As dear a memory for the morn,
 As that bold burst of happy praise,
 Uplifted o'er the garden ways.

A foolish envy filled her heart ;
She longed to still the thrilling voice
That travelled upward to the sun,
She had no spirit to rejoice,
But dreamed her fame was all undone.

And thus she murmured to the bird,
Whose native notes her anger stirred :
'Such boastful song was never heard,
'Come get you downward to your nest.
'The wind is whispering in the West,
'Come get you downward to your nest.'

The green leaves in the wakeful wood,
With sorrow heard the plaint ;
They knew the lark's clear song was born
Of adoration for the morn,
Which rose without constraint.
And lo ! they turned them from the flower
That scorned the minstrel's magic power !

Bereft of shadow at the noon,
She longed for one bright strain to cheer
Her drooping heart, but ah no more
The minstrel's voice was sweet to hear,
As in the early time of yore.

Breathless the air of summer slept ;
And all the noontide glory kept
A flood of flame, for not a leaf
Would turn to heed the rose's grief,

Dejectedly her damask heart
Received the fierce enduring smart
Of glaring day. Her roots were dry ;
The great white lilies standing by,
Could scarcely whisper what they feared,
The flower looked so strangely weird.

She thought of yester-evening's breeze,
Of star-lit hours, and rustling trees,
Of that glad song bequeathed at morn
Which she had heard with jealous scorn ;
If only *now* the bird would sing,
And hide her heart beneath his wing !

But all the world was lost to sound,
Save where the blue-bells on the hill,
In gentle dreams caught, now and then,
The distant tinkle of a rill,
Soft-murmuring the thought it had
Of gifts that made the morning glad.

The sleeping hedges full of scent,
Wondered which way the minstrel went,
And smiled beneath the flashing sun ;
The shadowy places in the wood
Made latticed shelter for the bees,
Which scarce could stay to take their ease.

So pale and paler grew the rose,
And nearer gloam the day wore on ;
Until the Western Wind stole by,
To find the blossom's scent had gone ;

*'Ah me !' it sighed, 'the vast untruth
'She told to blight the minstrel's fame,
'Has robbed her of the sweeter praise,
'That else had gathered round her name.'*

The evening twilight, fresh and calm,
Fell softly on a fading scene ;
The grasses bent beside the pool
That mirrored back the changing green :
Above the pastures spread the mist,
From off the altar of the earth ;
As if the parting day would breathe
A benediction for its birth !

Then cried the lilies to the Rose
*'To-morrow, praise the lark with us,
'For honest hearts receive again,
'The virtuous honour lavished thus.'*

No breath escaped the fainting flower,
Her bloom was blighted on the stem ;
The first-lit star in Luna's bower,
Looked vainly for her diadem :
The damask beauty died at dusk,
And never knew the minstrel's praise
Was sweeter for the gift of bloom,
She opened in the garden ways.

* * * *

But at the magic of the morn
He wept beside the Roseless thorn.



A BALLAD OF CUFFS AND COLLAR.

COME, set aside your Euclid, Sir,
 And put away your Greek ;
 I've waited here for half an hour,
 And more, to hear you speak :
 All day you've studied 'Ologies,
 All day you've grasped a pen,
 And lived among the thousand thoughts
 Of great departed men :
 But now, Sir, though you be a Scholar,
 You've got to don your cuffs and collar !

It's very fit these clever books
 Should have a leather binding ;
 In truth, their contents, I am sure,
 Require a deal of 'grinding' :
 But you, Sir, must not so enclose
 The pages of your being,
 Or else your clothing, and your mind,
 May seem to be agreeing !
 So hark to me, though you're a Scholar,
 And *please* put on your cuffs and collar !

I know you love Zoology ;
 You rave about a bone
 Of some huge beast that walked about
 Before the Age of Stone :
 The subject of its *vertebræ*
 To you may be inspiring,
 But such a *backbone* of debate
 To me is somewhat tiring :
 Forget, for once, you are a Scholar,
 And just put on your cuffs and collar.

Of course, I fully understand
 (The value of excuses !)
 And gaseous liquids, as you say,
 Have many varied uses :
 These wondrous instruments of yours
 Demand devout attention :
 (But oh, the matter's not the one
 That I desire to mention !)
 Forgive me, if I seem no Scholar,
 And *do* put on your cuffs and collar.

(He's hot upon another theme !)—
 ' The Blowfly,' did you say, Sir ?
 I'll study its Anatomy
 To-morrow, if I may, Sir :
 Its little liver's very fine,
 And what a speaking eye, Sir !
 (Oh drat the microscopic plates,
 And *blow* the horrid fly, Sir !)
 How proud I am you're such a Scholar,
 I'll put you on your cuffs and collar !

* * * *

He's vanished almost into air
 He's bolted up the ladder,
 Intent on searching for some work
 Upon the spotted adder :
 He really is a stubborn man,
 I hope the snake will bite him ;
 The study of its virus would
 Most certainly requite him.

* * * *

Good-bye, Sir, since you're such a scholar,
 I'll give away your cuffs and collar !

POPPIES IN THE CORN.
(*For Music.*)

Chorus of Maidens.

‘Ha!’

Laughed the poppies in the corn,
When the rosy, roguish morn
 Peeped from Eastern places :
Ethon heard the tale they told,
Whilst he leaped on tides of gold,
Swelling o’er the level mould,
 Starred with dewy graces.

Song of the Poppies.

Tall are we to meet the daylight,
 Red are we to greet the sun ;
Let the daisies hide in shadow,
 For our conquest has begun :
Songs, and joy, and laughter wait us,
 We were born to rule the field ;
And the tasselled heads of barley
 Unto us their homage yield.

Chorus of Maidens.

Morning heard, and morning smiled,
For she knew they were beguiled !

Solo.

Modest, in secluded corners,
Pink-tipped daisies dwelt alone ;
Soon the breezes heard them singing,
With a sweetness all their own.

Song of the Daisies.

Look, how lovely is the cornfield,
Look, how fair the poppies grow ;
Glorious is their ripened splendour
Where the wistful zephyrs blow :
Let us chant them worthy praises,
Heedless of our lowly birth,
Whilst remembering the beauties
Of those lordlier lives of earth !

Chorus of Maidens.

So the Daisies sang together,
Through the hours of harvest weather.

Solo.

There was music in the distance,
Like the measured, mellow tune
Of the oars, that meet the waters
In the sleeping tide of June :
All day long it lingered nearer,
Till at last the reapers came
Where the sunset, and the poppies,
Made a double flush of flame.

Duet.

Then the silver curves, unsparing,
Through the gold and crimson swept,
Whilst the Daisies, safely sheltered,
Wrapped their whiteness round, and wept.

Chorus of Maidens.

‘ Ah ! ’

Sighed the poppies in the corn,
 When the night star, newly born,
 Looked on them in sorrow :
 ‘ Better, in a cloistered way,
 ‘ Live to bloom another day,
 ‘ Than rejoice in proud display,
 ‘ And be gone to-morrow.’



THE SWANS.

BETWEEN the reeds, upon a quiet water,
 The swans once floated, with their arch'd throats set,
 White as the bloom that crowns shy April's daughter,—
 Oh, are they sailing yet ?

'Twas radiant starlight on the lustrous river,
 That night when gloaming fell without a sigh :
 And, as our oars made ripples toss and quiver,
 The swans went sailing by. . . .

Now lone the boat is that we steered together,
 It anchors empty 'neath a wind-kissed hill ;
 But yet, perchance, through all this clouded weather,
 The swans go sailing still.

Oh ! well-a-day, my love, and well for ever,
 God keep you safely where His heart is set ;
 Whilst I ?—will look upon the white swans never,
 Though they be sailing yet.

THE SEA-KING.

OH, Who in the world so free as I,
 In my kingdom on the waters ?
 The wild white gulls are as my sons,
 The petrels are my daughters :
 I dance to the storm in the dead of night,
 When the foam leaps high in a huge delight,
 There's never a foe that I dare not fight,
 And sink at the closest quarters.

Ho ! high to the hilt is my leathern breech,
 And my sinews court defiance ;
 My sturdy ship is my valiant help,
 And the pine-board my reliance ;
 My giant crew are my subjects all.
 And Woden guards us when dangers fall.

The spoils of a thousand shores are mine,
 I break the tribes asunder ;
 I smite with war the distant lands,
 And bring the proud chiefs under :
 My beams swell out with the hoarded wealth,
 My pulses glow with the wine of health ;
 What I lose by quest I can gain by stealth,
 And laugh at the strange men's wonder !

No smoke-wreathed roof shall be over me,
 No hearth is for my resting ;
 The north wind blows me sound to sleep,
 My helm the billows breasting :
 I pledge my crew in an ample cup,—
 Their blue eyes light as I toss it up !

Oh, jolly and brave is the pirate's life,
 The islands shake before me ;
 I take my choice of the best they yield,
 No counsellor is o'er me :
 I load my skiff with the fattened kine,
 I pluck the grape from the sweetest vine ;
 By axe and sword I have made them mine,
 With the willing waves that bore me.

Ho, straight to the front of the farthest main,
 I wend my way undaunted ;
 To win afresh by spear and flame,
 The glory I have vaunted ;
 For every step that the Sea-king goes,
 Shall bear the spoil from the Sea-king's foes !



STAR OF SPLENDOUR.

OH Star of splendour, locked in light,
 That shinest o'er a world of sleep ;
 Clear crystal on the brow of night,
 Reflected in the shadowy deep :
 Where mystic spheres are swung in space,
 And unknown glory gilds thy way,
 Shine on, to grant the world thy grace,
 Till break of day.

Oh Star of splendour : heart of hope ;
 Thou fair companion of the dark,
 Lipping with joy the dusky slope
 Where brooding mist had set its mark :
 Across the leaves that look for morn,
 Above the birds that dream of May,
 Fling down on night thy radiant scorn.
 Till break of day.

TO A DEAD LEAF.

(Fallen in July.)

SPEEDILY have you dropped from the height of the spangled
tree,

Away from the ranks of comrades where beautiful shelters be :
Say, Was it hard to turn through the world of the forest shade,
To this spot, where the drifting splendour an ocean of light has
made?

Oh the charm of the glamour, and oh the strength of the
spell,

When we fancy the height is haughty, and dream that the
depth is well.

Do you, for aye remember the dew at the dighted morn,
And the wondering notes that greeted your ear when the birds
were born?

Do you think of the saintly springtide, so luscious, and long,
and sweet,

That stole with the South wind lightly on eager and jewelled
feet?

Oh the song of the summer, and oh the sigh of the night,
When the darling day has vanished which seemed to be
infinite.

Stars, and the midnight idol, enthroned o'er that swaying tree,
When your murm'ring mates made music like that of a softened
sea :

Did never they tell a story, of leaves that had last year lain,
Out in a sombre shadow, and out in a rolling rain?

Oh the tinsel of fancy, and oh the gold of the truth,
When enchanted sceptres conquer, alluring the heart of
Youth. . . .

Once, when an early blossom broke suddenly by your side,
Did you pause, and reflect, and ponder, when suddenly, too, it
died ?

When a breath of betrayal bore it to lowlier places, where
You could look on it from your distance, and watch it decaying
there ?

Oh the tune of the laughter, and oh the time of the tear,
When the heart throbs slow in sorrow, and the verdure of
hope is sere.

Now you are curled and battered ; and ugly, and dry, and
brown :

You go where the gales will bear you, away from the green-
leaved town ;—

To wave no more in your glory, nor grant to a seeking wing
The boon of a sap-veined cradle, as gift for its hovering.

Oh the tale that is ended, and oh the song that was sung,
When our souls were on the summits, and we and the
world were young !



WHITE AND YELLOW.

HAPPY is the summer hour—
 She is clad in white,
 And she stoops to pluck a flower
 Blooming in the light,
 Whelmed with beauty mute and mellow
 Is the buttercup,—and yellow.

Steals my hand upon her own
 Neatly-gloved, and small ;
 Blushes on her cheek have blown,
 Loves she, after all ?
 Oh, the noon is mute and mellow,
 And the buttercup,—is yellow.

Weary is the winter hour—
 She is clad in white ;
 In her hand I fold a flower,
 ‘ My dead love, good night.’
 Ah ! the moon is mute and mellow,
 And the buttercup,—is yellow.



AN ALTAR.

WHITE linen chaste, and traceried around
 With foliaged flowers, damascened, and spread
 In satin gloss upon the dull, rich ground
 Of woven cloth, so delicately fine,
 It almost waves about the scented shrine.

The Tyrian red from shapely-angled panes
 Slants, in uncertain forms, upon the scene ;
 And here and there a fainter colour stains
 The altar vesture with a wild-rose tint,
 When lesser glories through the windows glint.

In silver holders, quaintly filigreed,
 Tall from the table mounts the moulded wax,
 Set firm and stately for the hour of need,
 When slow-borne tapers shall adorn each spire
 With single flames of consecrated fire.

Between the massive squares that hold the stems
 Of candelabra, are the snowy groups
 Of fresh-plucked blossoms, reared as diadems
 Above the brow of vases, crystal-clear,
 And wet, anon, with morning's dewy tear.

But, chief o'er all, upon the altar lifts
 A golden cross, majestic, and serene ;
 With silent speech its holy glory rifts
 The earthly shadows of a deep'ning gloam,
 And points to God, eternally at Home

BID ME LOVE THEE STILL.

SEAL the fountain of the rain,
 And hush the mellow-throated strain
 That drifts in woods at eve :
 Chain up the leaves before the wind,
 Bid light no more in dew be shrined ;
 But in my heart, my dearest, find
 No room for love to grieve.

Steal the golden dawn away,
 Which stands before the road of day,
 And hurl it into gloom ;
 In dusky threads of night-mist, weave
 A tale of deeds none else achieve ;
 But in your heart, my dearest, leave
 Some place for me to bloom.

Take the damask from the rose,
 And sweep it o'er eternal snows
 That crystal on the hill ;
 Yea, tear the star from yonder dome,
 And drown it in a flood of foam,
 And sink it deep in seas at gloam,—
 But bid me love thee still.

YEAR-END.

MYSTIC music round the hill-tops,
 Chanted in a minor strain ;
 'Tis a whisper from the Old Year,
 Half of rest and half of pain :
 On the mountain is the night-wind,
 In the valley is a sigh ;
 But the dark wing of December
 Will be lifted,—by-and-by.

Watch with me the white stars sailing
 In the blue of yonder bay ;
 They are shining from their distance
 In the old familiar way :
 Ah ! regret is not for roses
 That have dropped afar with June,
 But for doubt in human spirits
 When there's discord in the tune.

Ocean surge has deeply sounded
 Varied notes in every ear ;
 We have wandered on a margin
 Through the twelve links of the year :—
 Past the leaf-stir, and the rustle
 Of the chestnut, and the corn,
 Past the thickness at the twilight,
 And the clearing at the morn.

What if sometime we seemed slipping
In the billows at our side ?
Lo, the Hand of the Eternal
Made our footing-place more wide :
And the wild wind went to Westward
When we trembled at a cloud,
And we saw a rift of glory,
When the sobbing storm grew loud.

* * * *

There's a murmur in the meadows,
And a stir among the stars ;
There's a loosing of an anchor
From the strong embrace of bars :
Bridal music's on the landscape,
Wedding bells are on the tide,—
Hope the angel sings from Heaven,
Time has won another Bride !



A CRADLE SONG.

TOIL is over, the day is done,
 Shadows are dropping one by one ;
 Cool and still, still and cool,
 By misty meadow and pensive pool :
 Hush-a-bye, hush-a bye ;
 Never you mind, though the night be nigh,
 Some must waken, and some must weep,
 Mother is singing her babe to sleep.

Dewy dingle and lonely mere
 Love the time of the twilight dear ;
 Drop to slumber, and close your eyes,
 Fadeth the gleam in the western skies :
 Fleeth the glow of the noontide hour,
 Dreameth, at last, the drowsy flower ;
 Here, in the darkness, still am I,
 Singing my darling's lullaby.

There may come to you dusky day,
 Mother, perchance, will have gone away ;
 Left you lonely and left you sad
 With the echo of songs you had :
 Hush-a-bye : hush-a-bye ;
 Never you mind, though the night be nigh,
 ' Some must waken, and some must weep,
 So the angels will bring you sleep.'

A BOAT SONG.*

TO ARTHUR HOLT, ESQ.

HERE'S to the rippling river,
 And here's to the sparkling stream :
 The sun mounts high in a cloudless sky,
 The day is like a dream :
 Our craft shall glide above the tide,
 We'll idle up and down ;
 So lend an oar, and pull from shore,
 Away from the streets of Town.

Here's to the lipping river,
 And here's to the fragrant breeze ;
 We speed along with a burst of song
 Between the willow trees :
 The depths untold have gained their gold,
 The king-cups are their crown ;
 Be merry, oh ho, where the waters flow,
 Afar from the streets of Town !

Here's to the moon-lit river,
 And here's to the dewy stars ;
 We're paddling home in a windless gloam,
 By misty brinks and bars :
 The day is past, the tide ebbs fast,
 The leafy forests frown ;
 So lend an oar, and pull to shore,
 And back to the streets of Town.

* Author's Musical Copyright.

A DEER-HUNT.

SHAME on you, fair-faced woman,
 And shame on you, 'sturdy' knight !
 And shame on ye all who glory
 In putting the dumb to flight !
 Fine sport for the hounds and horses,
 Fine sport for the gallant meet,
 When the lissom deer sniffs danger,
 And his harmless hoofs are fleet.

He has fed on the sweet young grasses,
 And honoured a keeper's care ;
 But his limbs may be wrenched asunder
 To humour the ' brave ' and ' fair ' :
 As he races across the country,
 In hope of escaping death,
 His eyes start out with terror,
 And his sides are pained with breath.

Now after him, ' high-born ladies,'
 And after him, ' stalwart knight ' ;
 And press him hard on the left hand,
 And press him hard on the right :
 Yea, run him close to the haunches,
 Yea, laugh at his dire despair,
 Whilst he makes for the pointed palings,
 That hinder his progress there !

Will he leap to the height, and o'er it ?
 ' He's a spirited buck,' you say ;
 And you sigh lest the hunt be ended,
 Or he happen to get away :

He's up! Hie, off with the hounds now,
 Let each of you look who likes,—
 He's writhing in bloody torment,
 He's fixed on the cruel spikes. . . .

Do you dare declare you're cultured,
 Do you dare declare you've hearts ;
 Do you boast of supreme 'refinement'
 And love of the gentle arts ?
 Then fling your lies to the breezes,
 And fling your words to the wind,
 Whilst yon tame brute breathes his latest,
 On spikes that are crimson-lined.



CHANSON D'AMOUR.

As the flush of a rose-flecked morning,
 Over a calm gray sea ;
 Or the taste of a fragrant fountain,
 On the lip of a thirsty lea ;
 So is thy love to me.

As a song in the rain-cleared thicket,
 Studded with leaf and tree ;
 Or the laugh of a ransomed water,
 Leaping the hills in glee ;
 So is thy love to me.

As a wreathing of dewy blossoms,
 High on a holy shrine ;
 Or the folding of leafy vesture
 Over a fruited vine ;
 So is my love to thine,

ABENDLIED.

MIST in the meadow, and star in the height,
 Silence and wonder at fading of light ;
 Nests of tall grasses that grow in the streams,
 Darker and darker 'mid shadowing dreams :
 Softened to silence is morning's clear song,
 Sleep finds her home in the dew-dappled throng ;
 Temples upreared in the forest are still :
 Ah ! but the promise is over the hill !

'Chanted and charmed in a breathless repose
 Leaf-hidden branches bend over the rose ;
 Cradled in green is the garden, and sweet
 With the remembrance of bloom-sandalled feet :
 Darkness is coming 'twixt sunset and dawn.
 Darkness is coming, but so is the morn :
 Waiteth the throstle where pastures grow chill,
 Ah ! but the promise is over the hill !

Some day the garden will tremble in brown,
 When the tall gold of the harvest is down ;
 Coldly the river will run to the Sea.—
 There will be room on the water for me !
 Then, when the flowerless banks shall be steep,
 And there is dusk on the measureless deep,
 Bid me look up to the Infinite still,
 Ah ! where the Promise is over the Hill !

IN THRALL.

FOR thee alone, I wait beside my lattice,
 Where the ripe roses charm the starry gloam :—
 I watch the leaves swing idly on their tendrils,—
 I hear the sheep-bells tinkling nearer home :
 Of thy last look I dream, amid the stillness
 That wraps the woods, where dewy blossoms fold,
 Till, like a seal, it burns upon my vision,
 And makes its impress for the days untold.

For thee alone, I spin me silken meshes,
 To hold my fancy in a fettered grace ;—
 I weave a web, all beautiful and golden,
 Then, half expectant, look to see thy face :
 Yet, wert thou near, how quickly would I hide me,
 Lest wilful blushes all the tale should tell ;
 Though, to thine heart, perchance, they were but echoes
 Of the one story, that thou knowest well !

He comes ! My King ! Be still, oh heart, and listen,
 How fair his footfall sounds upon the night !
 Now is the gloam more lustrous than the noonday,
 Now is the dusk more glorious than the light :
 From the green tangle flees a bird, affrighted,
 But I, Belovéd, wing not so from thee ;
 For, in the hush of this transparent darkness,
 Thou art a nest where I may shelter me.

TWO FISHES.

THERE was once a hungry whale, and he met a little sprat,—
 As whales, Sir, so very often do ;
 And this little fish, they say, he tried hard to look away,—
 Like the lassies when the laddies come to woo.
 Now the whale was very kind, for he had a thoughtful mind,
 And he whispered, “ Don’t be hiding in the shade ;
 I am rather big, I know, but I’m harmless too, and so
 You needn’t be one tiny bit afraid ! ”

Then this charming little sprat, who oft long’d for some renown,
 Made obeisance, Sir, and said : “ You’re very kind !
 It’s an honour, you’ll agree, for a little fish like me,
 To be meeting with a somebody refined :
 I don’t often get about, so perhaps you’ll take me out.”
 And the whale said : “ I’ll be glad to show you round ;
 For it’s sweet to know the wishes of such trustful little fishes ” ;
 (But he smiled a hungry smile, without a sound).

Then this simple little sprat talked of all the world he knew
 In a confidential manner, bound to please ;
 And when proudly home he came, he called his friends by name,
 Though he seemed to have an awful lot of these !—
 So the sprats came swimming by, with their heads held *very* high ;
 And the whale politely said : “ It’s rather hot.”
 But,—believe me, if you can, Sir,—they didn’t live to answer,
 For he winked one eye, . . . and gobbled up the lot !



CREDO.

In heeding the chirp of the sparrow,
 As well as the swell of the lark ;
 In seeking the fluttering pinions,
 That fly alone in the dark :
 I believe.

In the charm of a ready greeting,
 As, thanks for the gift of speech ;
 In a quest of tune for the hearing
 Of all who are in our reach :
 I believe.

In the something good in my neighbour,
 And of more than good to be ;
 In the dashing of crystal waters
 To the root of a thirsty tree :
 I believe.

In a breaking away from custom,—
 If it be as bars to the light ;
 In the shame of the idle cowards,
 Who laugh at men in the fight :
 I believe.

In the value of all things human,
 In the honour of all divine ;
 In the power of God to raise Him
 From *every* dust a shrine :
 I believe.

In the coming of golden eras,
 In the righting of every wrong ;
 When men of themselves are willing,
 And men of themselves are strong :
 I believe.

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